

OCTOBER 12, 1917.

No. 628.

SIX Cents

FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF
BOYS THAT MAKE MONEY.

LOST IN THE TROPICS;
OR, THE TREASURE OF TURTLE KEY.

By A SELF-MADE MAN.
AND OTHER STORIES



"Ovaire wiz you both!" cried Pierre Gerard, giving Dick and Sam a shove into the sea. "Now then, swim to ze island, mon enfants. By gar! You will be luckee if ze shark do not make a meal of you."

FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

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LOST IN THE TROPICS

—OR—

THE TREASURE OF TURTLE KEY

By A SELF-MADE MAN.

CHAPTER I.

THE RUNAWAYS.

"I don't like the looks of this house, nor the people in it," said Dick Appleton in a low, guarded tone to his friend, Sam Atkins, as the two sat at a common deal table, close to a window overlooking a creek that jutted in from the Patapsco River, a number of miles south of the city of Baltimore. "I'm sorry we stopped here."

"It can't be helped now," replied Sam, with a furtive glance around at the hard-looking characters, all of them evidently sailors, who were drinking and smoking in pairs and groups at similar tables, in the low-ceilinged public room of a roadhouse, the name of which, displayed on a weather-beaten board over the door, outside, was the "Fishererman's Rest." "Any port in a storm, you know. It is the only house we've sighted in hours, and we're tired and hungry after our long walk. We've been on our feet since daylight, and I don't feel that I could stir another foot unless somebody urged me on with a hot poker. Then my stomach is that empty I can eat any old thing that looks like food."

"I'm pretty well petered out myself," replied Dick, "but just the same I wish we hadn't come here."

"What are you afraid of, anyway?" asked his companion. "It isn't like you to show the white feather. I never saw you do it at school, no matter what the odds were against you. Then, after planning our escape from the academy, look at the risk you took with the dog yesterday morning. He'd have made a mouthful of me if you had not come to my rescue and put him out of business. After that, nobody can tell me you've got a drop of cowardly blood in your veins."

"I'm not afraid to meet any trouble that comes my way, but I don't believe in seeking it."

"Neither do I; but I don't see that we've courted any particular danger by coming in here. I'll admit the house looks tough; that the landlord looks like a prizefighter, or something worse, and that the crowd here don't look like a Sunday-school class; but what of it? We're not so flush that we need fear being robbed."

"We've got ten dollars between us, and many a man has been murdered for much less than that. I've noticed since we've been sitting at this table, waiting for the landlord to fetch us something to eat, that the chaps in the room have been eying us in a peculiar manner."

"Why shouldn't they, seeing that we're strangers? Besides, our presence here in this out-of-the-way spot, hungry and footsore, must have struck them as rather odd. They heard you tell the landlord, in answer to his question, that we're on our way to Baltimore, and I'll bet few people, unless they're tramps, travel the Chesapeake shore on foot

when there's a railroad only a few miles away that would save time and shoe leather at the rate of three cents a mile."

"It isn't anybody's business how we travel, or what road we take to reach our destination," replied Dick.

"That's right; but we can't prevent people being curious on the subject."

"It was necessary for us to take the most unfrequented and out-of-the-way road in order to throw our pursuers off the track."

Sam nodded.

"If we'd been caught and yanked back to the academy, Dr. Titus would have seen to it that we would not only have been punished severely, but that we wouldn't have had another chance to give the school the slip."

"I'm not sure that we're safe from capture yet. Dr. Titus may have notified the Baltimore police to be on the lookout for us."

"I'm willing to take my chances with the Baltimore police. We don't intend to remain long enough in the city for them to get a line on us. If they're watching for us, it is at the railroad station."

"They'll have a sweet time looking for us there," grinned Sam.

At that moment Dick raised his eyes, and met the fixed gaze of a low-browed, ugly-looking chap who sat by himself at a small table at the end of the small bar.

His scowling glance was so intent that it made the boy a bit uneasy.

It was full of malicious satisfaction, as if the young visitors occupied a large share of his thoughts, and there was some definite purpose in his mind.

Dick didn't relish the interest the fellow seemed to be taking in them.

He would have called Sam's attention to it, but was afraid his companion would turn around and look at the man.

Just then the landlord appeared from a passage in the rear of the room with a tray containing two plates, knives and forks, a dish of cold meat, a platter of bread, some butter, and two cups of coffee.

He unloaded these articles in front of the boys and walked over to the bar to wait on a customer who wanted some liquid refreshment.

The sight of the food cut short any further conversation between the boys for the time being, and with one accord they transferred a portion of the meat to their plates and began to eat like very hungry lads indeed.

Dick noticed that the ill-looking rascal scarcely took his eyes off them while they were eating.

He had a bottle and a tumbler in front of him, and he drank of the contents of the former quite frequently.

The rest of the crowd seemed to have got used to their presence, and ceased to pay any attention to them.

The landlord, however, had his eyes on them a good part of the time, though the boys were not aware of that fact.

Dick and Sam devoured every scrap of meat and bread in sight and finished their coffee.

Then they sat back in their chairs feeling much better.

About this time a newcomer appeared on the scene.

He wore a cap and a rough pea-jacket, had bushy side whiskers, and an authoritative air.

He stepped up to the bar, called for whisky, and drank it down like so much water.

After a brief conversation with the landlord he turned to the crowd and said in a hoarse, fog-horn voice:

"Come, my bullies, it's time you were shakin' a leg for the schooner. We drop down the creek in twenty minutes. D'ye understand?"

The men seemed to take his words in the light of an order that was to be obeyed.

They arose from the tables like a covey of birds startled by a hunter's gun, and started, with a kind of rolling gait, for the entrance.

The newcomer, who appeared to be the mate of the schooner, followed after the last man, and through the window at their elbows Dick and Sam saw the crowd making their way down a lane beside the creek.

One man only, besides the landlord, remained in the public room.

This was the surly-looking fellow who seemed to be so much interested in the two boys that they more than divided his attention with the rum bottle.

Presently the landlord went to the door, stepped outside, and walked over to a horse trough which was fed by a common iron pump set on top of a wooden base.

He leaned against the pump, pipe in mouth, and after looking up and down the road, glanced steadily off toward a schooner that was hauled up alongside a small wharf in the creek about a quarter of a mile away.

The boys looked in that direction, too, through the window, following the movements of the sailors who had just left the roadhouse.

They were tumbling aboard the vessel while the mate paused on the wharf.

Pretty soon the boys saw the schooner's jib begin to rise from her short bowsprit.

At that moment they were startled by a hoarse, thick voice behind them.

"Well, my hearties, what be ye thinkin' o' doin'?" said the voice. "Slippin' yer cables for a trip aboard some ister (oyster) hooker on the bay, eh?"

The boys turned quickly, and were confronted by the burly form and leering countenance of the man who had sat by himself at the table near the bar.

His legs seemed to be a bit unsteady, for he held on to the table with one huge, sunburned paw, while the other grasped a mussed-up newspaper.

"No," replied Dick, giving him a steady look. "We're going to slip our cables for Baltimore after we have rested ourselves."

"Oh, ye are?" replied the man with a malevolent grin. "And what might ye intend to do there?"

"What business is that of yours?" asked Dick sharply, for now that they had but one man to deal with he didn't much mind what he said.

The fellow, instead of blazing up, as Dick more than half expected he would, gave utterance to a deep chuckle that seemed to come all the way from his stomach.

"I don't reckon ye'll go to Baltimore unless I go with yer."

"That so?" replied Dick sarcastically. "You seem to take a lot of interest in us."

"I do," grinned the man. "Ye're my meat, and I don't reckon I'll lose sight of ye till I hand ye over to the gent as is lookin' for yer."

"What's that?" fairly gasped Dick, while Sam's jaw dropped, and he looked bewildered.

"Ho! ho!" laughed the fellow. "Ye look all took aback, like some old hooker struck by a white squall."

"What are you talking about?" demanded Dick anxiously.

"I'm talkin' business, my hearties."

"Business! I don't know what you mean."

"Ye don't, eh? That's what I mean. Read that."

The speaker slapped the newspaper, a copy of a Baltimore

daily, down on the table before them, and pointed to an advertisement in a prominent column.

It read as follows:

REWARD!

"Twenty-five dollars and expenses will be paid to any person who will bring back Dick Appleton (aged 18) and Sam Atkins (aged 17), runaways, to the Oriole Academy, Northview, Blank County, Maryland. Or fifteen dollars will be paid for information leading to the capture of the said boys.

"THEOPHILUS TITUS, A.M., LL.D."

Then followed an accurate description of Dick and Sam.

"That fills the bill, don't it, my hearties?" chuckled the burly man.

The two were staggered.

Although this was an unexpected shock, Dick did not intend that he and his companion should be checkmated by the half-drunken rascal before them.

"What have we got to do with this advertisement?" he demanded as coolly as he could.

"Now look ye, my hearty, to catch a weasel asleep ye've got to get up mighty early. Ye two are the lads that's mentioned in that there advertisement, and I mean to earn that twenty-five bones."

"How do you know we're the boys?" asked Dick, more to gain time to consider what he and Sam should do to extricate themselves from a bad predicament than because he cared what the fellow's answer would be.

"How do I know? I've got eyes in my head, and I kin read what's as plain as the nose on yer face. As soon as I seen ye come in at that door I knowed ye was the two chaps what runned away from that school, so I made up my mind to nab ye."

He laid one hand on Sam's shoulder, and with the other reached for Dick.

The boy sprang to his feet, put out one leg and tripped the unsteady rascal.

He fell to the floor with a crash, his head striking on a heavy stone spittoon, which cut an ugly gash just over his left temple.

Then he rolled over like a dead man, for not a limb moved, nor a muscle quivered.

CHAPTER II.

DRUGGED.

"Good Lord!" ejaculated Sam, with a thrill of horror. "You've killed him!"

"I hope not," said Dick, casting an uneasy look at the motionless man, particularly at the gash, which was bleeding freely. "I guess he's only unconscious."

"What are we going to do now? We're sure to be arrested for this, and then the game will be up," said Sam anxiously.

"Who's going to arrest us?"

"The landlord."

"The two of us ought to be a match for him."

"But there are others around the house who will help him."

"I'll admit we're in a bad pickle," replied Dick. "We'll have to make a bluff of some kind. Suppose we call the landlord and tell him that the fellow came over and attacked us, lost his footing, and fell against the spittoon. That's pretty near the truth, and looks reasonable."

"The fellow might come to while we're trying to explain matters to the landlord, and then he'd give us away as runaways. The landlord would stand in with him on the reward, and between the two of them our name would be mud."

"Have you any other plan to propose?"

"There's an open window yonder. I move that we get out that way and take to the woods," said Sam.

"All right," replied Dick. "Come on."

They moved toward the window, and Dick was in the act of getting out when the landlord suddenly entered the room.

He gave an exclamation when he saw the unconscious and bleeding sailor on the floor.

Then he saw the boys trying to take French leave of the premises.

"Hold on there!" he roared. "Where are you young rascals going?"

He rushed forward in time to pull Sam back into the room.

"Just going out into your yard, that's all," replied Dick.

"Are you sure you two wasn't trying to beat it and leave me in the lurch, after feeding you?" said the landlord, who really believed that was their object.

"No; but that chap yonder, when he attacked us, and then fell down and bumped his head against the spittoon, scared us. We thought he might have had a fit and passed in his checks," said Dick.

"So he attacked you, did he?" said the landlord. "He must have been drunker than I thought he was. No danger of Bill Spurgeon turning up his toes from a crack on the head. He's had many of them sort of things. Come over and we'll look at him."

The boys reluctantly followed the landlord, who took care to keep himself between them and the door.

He declared that Spurgeon would be none the worse for the blow he had received when he got his senses back, and made the boys help him carry the man to the back part of the room and lay him on the floor.

"Now, my lads, I think you said you were bound for Baltimore," he said.

"We are," replied Dick.

"If you intend to continue your way on foot you'll never reach the city before midnight, even putting your best foot forward. You'd better stay here all night. I'll give you bed and grub for a dollar apiece. That's reasonable, ain't it?"

"All right," replied Dick promptly. "Here's the two cases in advance."

The landlord took the money, looked at it to make sure it was all right, and put it in his pocket.

"Will you go to your room now and tidy up a bit?" he said in a friendly manner.

Without waiting for an answer he grabbed Dick and Sam lightly by the arm and led them out into an adjoining entry, then upstairs to the second floor, which was the limit of the roadhouse in height.

It was not part of the boys' program to stop at this house all night.

Indeed, they were both anxious to get on their way toward Baltimore as soon as possible.

The landlord's manner was mildly insistent, however, as if he had taken upon his shoulders the direction of his young guests' affairs.

"This is a fine room for the money," he said, opening the door of a small chamber in which there was a very ordinary bed, two chairs, a washstand, and a shelf with a small looking-glass above it.

The floor was covered with a dirty piece of rag carpet, while the mattress looked suspiciously thin.

"Just see if there's water in the bowl," added the landlord, giving them each a light shove into the room.

"Yes, there's water," replied Sam, taking a look.

"I'll let you know when supper is ready," said the landlord, abruptly shutting the door.

Alone in the room, the window of which overlooked the yard, the boys looked at each other.

The same thought seemed to have occurred to both—that the landlord's actions were suspicious.

"Look here, Sam," said Dick, "I don't fancy this man's soft-soapy way. There's something behind it, or I don't know what I'm talking about. Maybe he's seen the advertisement, too, and intends to try and make the twenty-five dollars himself."

"I wouldn't be surprised. Let's watch our chance and make a bolt," replied Sam.

Dick walked to the door and tried it.

"Just as I expected. It is locked."

"Locked?" gasped Sam.

"Yes."

"Then we're prisoners?"

"Looks that way."

"What are we going to do?"

"That's what we'll have to consider."

"In trying to give the half-drunken sailor the slip we've only jumped from the frying-pan into the fire."

"We mustn't remain in the fire till we are burned."

"The question is, how are we going to make our escape?"

"It will soon be dark, then perhaps we can drop out through the window."

The boys looked out through the window and saw that a drop of less than fifteen feet would land them in the yard.

Dick tried the lower sash, and found that nothing prevented its easy movement up and down.

"If the landlord intended to keep us prisoners in this room

it's a wonder that he did not fasten this window beforehand," said Sam.

"He didn't have the chance to do anything like that when he locked us in here."

"Which is likely to prove a good thing for us."

"I hope so."

"He said he'd let us know when supper was ready, but I guess that was a bluff."

"He may bring our supper up here."

"I hope he will, for that lunch we had only took the edge off my appetite," said Sam.

"If he does, we mustn't let on that we suspect he is working against us. We must give him to understand that we are perfectly satisfied to remain here all night. By that means we may throw him off his guard, and he won't be so likely to hold us up and turn us over to the police, if they

"You think he has seen that advertisement, recognized us, and intends to take us back to the academy and earn the twenty-five dollars?"

"Looks that way to me. That advertisement occupies a prominent place in the paper, and has been seen and commented on by several thousand people."

"I'll bet it has. Even if we get away from here we're likely to be identified along the road to Baltimore. Or if we reach Baltimore all right, some person in the city is likely to hold us up and turn us over to the police, if they don't see their way clear to capturing us themselves. I think we'd better make a change in our arrangements and give Baltimore a wide berth."

"The only way we can reach the Eastern Shore, where you live, without tramping up to Wilmington—for it's risky to take a train—and then going down via Delaware, is by boat from Baltimore, thirty miles across the bay," said Dick.

"I suppose your stepfather knows by this time that you have hooked it from the academy."

"I think it likely that he does."

"What'll he do if Dr. Titus fails to capture you?"

"Put a detective on my track, if he hasn't already done so."

"Can't you persuade him to send you to another school? I'll bet my father will do that when I get home and tell him all I've been up against at the Oriole Academy."

"No. He and Dr. Titus are old friends. That's why he sent me to that school. Anything the doctor says goes with him, while any kick I may make won't count."

"Then you really mean to go out West to your mother's sister?"

"That is my intention."

"Won't your stepfather suspect that, and send out there after you?"

"Probably he will, but I intend to fool him. I'm going to keep out of his way till I get to be twenty-one, and then he won't have authority over me any longer."

"I'm glad I haven't a stepfather," said Sam earnestly.

"You're lucky. Mine has had a grouch against me ever since my mother died."

"It's a wonder he's willing to spend money on your education."

"He can't help himself. Mother left a certain amount of her money by will for that purpose. Mr. Edwards, however, has the right to pick out the school; that is why he made it a point to send me to Dr. Titus. It always will be my opinion that he told the doctor to make me walk a chalk line."

"Which the doctor has done," grinned Sam.

"Bet your life he has! That's why I skipped out."

"He made it hard for me because I was your chum, and so we lit out together."

At that moment the boys heard the key click in the lock.

The door opened, and the landlord entered with a tray of food.

"I thought I'd bring your supper up here, to save you the trouble of coming downstairs," he said with an unctuous grin, as he deposited the tray on the bed.

"Very kind of you," replied Dick sarcastically.

"When you get through you can shove the tray under the bed. I'll wake you in the morning about six, so you can make an early start for Baltimore," said the host, rubbing his fat hands together.

"All right," answered Dick. "As we're fagged out, we'll turn in as soon as we've polished the supper off. That ham and eggs looks good."

"It is good. I raise my own pork, and them eggs is fresh."

The boys believed him, and after watching them begin

their meal the landlord withdrew and once more softly turned the key in the lock.

"He's a foxy old rooster," remarked Sam.

"That's what he is, but we're going to fool him just the same," replied Dick.

The boys, however, were ignorant of the trap that the astute landlord had laid for them.

They ate their supper with great relish, and drank every drop of the coffee; then they shoved the tray under the bed.

"We'll wait half an hour, and then slip out of the window," said Dick.

"Gee! but I feel dead sleepy," said Sam inside of five minutes.

"So do I, but the fresh air will wake us up when we get outside."

Sam yawned, and his eyes looked as heavy as lead.

Dick looked at him.

"Here! Don't go to sleep!" he said.

"Who's going-going to sleep?" returned Sam.

"You are. Gracious! I'll be off myself if I don't look out!"

The boy walked unsteadily to the window, threw up the cushion and leaned out.

For a moment the cool night air revived him, and he sat down on the chair.

"Sam!" he cried.

There was no answer from his companion.

"Sam!" repeated Dick, louder.

Still no reply.

"I believe he's—he's gone—gone—to—sleep."

He got up and looked over at Sam.

The lad was stretched, unconscious, on the bed.

"He is a— I wonder what's the mat—ter with me! I feel—feel just as if—"

He dropped back into his chair, stared at the ceiling a moment, and then his head fell over on his arm and he was fast asleep—as dead to the world as a log.

The foxy landlord had drugged the two boys.

CHAPTER III.

SENT TO SEA.

An hour later the door opened softly, and the landlord thrust his head into the room and flashed the lamp he carried in his hand about.

He saw the condition of the two boys, and a satisfied grin wrinkled his hard-looking face for a moment.

"It's all right," he said to some one behind him. "Come in and take a look at 'em. You'll find 'em stout lads, both of 'em. They'll make good hands aboard your brig."

The landlord entered the room, holding the lamp well up, and made way for the individual behind.

He was a big, stout man, with mahogany-hued hands and face.

His most conspicuous feature was a particularly large nose of a rubicund color, suggestive of close acquaintance with a gin bottle.

Half a dozen excrescences ornamented its streaky surface, like good-sized warts, and rather added to its fiery aspect.

A heavy growth of jet-black whiskers encircled his jaws from ear to ear, and as the hair was tough, like bristles, it gave him a fierce look.

His name was Jabez Caulder, and he was the captain of the brig *Malta*, owned by a Baltimore shipping firm that was in the South American trade.

He looked the boys over critically.

"They'll do," he said tersely. "I'll make sailors of 'em in short order, or shark's meat."

"They're worth \$30 each. You won't have to pay 'em any wages on the first trip out and back to Rio, where you're bound."

"Sixty dollars is a lot of money," replied Captain Caulder cautiously.

"Well, you can have Bill Spurgeon, who's an A.B., in with them for \$75. He's worth as much as both of these chaps."

As the skipper wanted Spurgeon bad, and couldn't get him without the connivance of the landlord, he agreed to the terms.

"I'll send a boat up the creek for the three in an hour," he said, walking out of the room.

"All right. We'll have a drink over it," replied the landlord.

The two men went downstairs.

Catain Caulder paid the money over in the shape of a \$100 bill, receiving \$25 in change, and took a receipt.

After the worthy pair had indulged in several drinks the skipper departed toward the creek, where a small boat awaited him.

An hour later four sailors appeared at the roadhouse and the landlord received and treated them.

Taking two of them to a small room on the ground floor, he pointed at Bill Spurgeon, who lay on a cot in his clothes snoring like a house afire.

They took the sailor up between them and carried him out of the house.

The landlord then took the other two men upstairs to the room where Dick and Sam lay, in blissful unconsciousness of the fate that was before them.

One of the men grabbed Dick, the other Sam, and off they went with them.

Bill Spurgeon was already in the bottom of the boat when the two sailors arrived with the boys.

Dick and Sam were tossed with little ceremony into the boat, and the sailors, taking up the oars, rowed down the creek to the Patapsco River.

The shadowy outlines of the brig *Malta* lay before them at anchor.

Spurgeon and the boys were carried up her side and thence to the foul-smelling forecastle, where they were dumped into separate bunks.

There they were left to come to their senses at their leisure, while the brig was got under way, and was soon slipping down with the tide toward Chesapeake Bay.

Reaching that big body of water, her nose was pointed southward, and she slipped down toward the broad Atlantic, about 170 miles away, under a light breeze.

At eight o'clock next morning the brig was off the mouth of the Potomac River.

Dick Appleton rolled over in his bunk, blinked up at the shaft of sunlight which shot down through the forecastle hatch, wondered at the strangeness of his surroundings, and then sat bolt upright and looked about him.

"Where the dickens am I?" he asked himself in great surprise. "This looks like the hold of a vessel. Why, it is a vessel! She's under way, too! Good gracious! What am I doing aboard of her?"

Then his gaze lighted on Sam, who was still snoring in the next bunk.

"Why, there's Sam! This is blamed funny."

Just then the mate of the brig came down into the forecastle to rouse up the new hands, who he thought had slept long enough.

He carried a rope's-end in one hand.

This article, which the man was in the habit of using on the persons of the sailors to "freshen their way," as he called it, had a hard knot at one end.

"Hello!" he said, stopping in front of Dick. "So you've come to? Just bundle yourself on deck, and be spry about it!"

"Bundle myself on deck!" repeated Dick. "How came I here?"

"I didn't come down here to answer questions, my hearty. Start yourself!"

Dick judged by the glint in the man's eye, as well as the rope's-end in his hand, that it would be the part of prudence to obey orders, so he jumped out of the bunk and walked over to the short ladder that led on deck.

As he put his foot on the ladder he heard a dull thud as the mate brought the knotted end of the rope down on Sam's back, and this was instantly followed by a howl of pain from Sam as he started up and looked at his aggressor.

"Get a move on!" thundered the mate, administering another whack that brought a second cry from the boy.

Sam didn't understand the situation even a little bit.

He didn't know where he was, nor why he should be assaulted in such an unprovoked and savage manner.

He was not a boy to take a beating from anybody without cause, and he was sure that he did not deserve a whaling at that moment.

The result was he resented it, and his resentment took the form of a blow straight from the shoulder, which lighted on the mate's nose, knocking the astonished man over as clean as a whistle.

Sam then sprang to his feet, ready to defend himself.

The mate jumped to his feet boiling over with fury. Sam's fist was hard, because he was accustomed to bag-punching in the academy gymnasium, and the man had felt it.

The blow had started blood, too.

"You young sculpin!" roared the mate. "You shall pay dearly for that! I'll cut you into ribbons before I'm done with you!"

"I don't think you will," replied Sam coolly. "I'd like to know what you mean by jumping on me without cause."

"I'll show you what I mean!" cried the man, springing at him with the rope's-end swung aloft, ready for business, and ugly business, too.

Dick, who had paused with one foot on the lowest step of the ladder, saw the danger that threatened his chum.

As the two boys had always stuck by one another through thick and thin, he darted to his friend's aid.

He caught the mate's descending arm and arrested the blow.

The man turned and glared savagely at him.

"Why, you measly little rat, are you butting in? You shall have a taste of the same medicine!"

He swung around to strike Dick, when Sam grabbed his arm this time.

The mate fairly sputtered in his fury.

The language he used made the air blue.

He struck out at Sam with his huge, hairy, tanned fist, but Sam ducked like lightning, and the mate spun around from the wasted force of the blow.

As soon as he steadied himself he grabbed Sam by the shoulder and brought the rope down on his back.

The boy roared and jabbed him in the eye, while Dick, now pretty mad, struck him in the jaw.

A furious scrap ensued, during which Sam was knocked like a shuttlecock into his bunk, and then the mate attempted to annihilate Dick the same way.

Dick, however, was so lucky as to plant a heavy short-arm upper-cut on the point of the officer's chin, and he went down and out.

CHAPTER IV.

UP AGAINST A HARD FATE.

As the mate went down on the floor, completely dazed, Sam recovered himself.

"What in thunderation does this all mean, Dick?" asked the somewhat bewildered Sam. "Where are we at? This isn't the room in the roadhouse where we were at my last recollection."

"Blessed if I know what it does mean," replied Dick. "We're aboard some vessel, that's clear enough, and the vessel is in motion."

"I don't remember coming aboard any vessel," replied Sam.

"Nor I. We must have been carried aboard while we slept."

"If that is so, then that blamed landlord is at the bottom of the matter."

"I don't see how we could be carried aboard this vessel without waking up and finding it out."

"I don't see how we could, either; but here we are, notwithstanding. I wonder who that fellow is we knocked out? If he's the captain, we shall catch it hot when he comes to his senses. You must have hit him a good one."

"I guess I did. Look at my knuckles. He's coming around now. Let's get out of this before he sees us."

Dick ran nimbly up the ladder, followed by Sam.

They found themselves standing on the raised roof of the forecastle, facing the long, narrow deck that ran as far as the cabin.

Perhaps eight sailors were scattered about, engaged in various light duties.

The brig was under full sail, wafted along by a smacking breeze.

On the port side loomed Tangier Islands, off the Maryland shore.

On the starboard side lay the beach of Northumberland County, Virginia.

The Malta was sailing along in mid-channel, the sunshine sparkling upon the rippling waters of Chesapeake Bay, which was dotted with many small craft, including a revenue cutter steaming toward the Potomac.

The boys gazed in no little astonishment at their surroundings.

The Malta was an old, weather-beaten hooker that had faced the storms and surges of many ocean trips, and she did not look at all inviting.

She sat deep in the water, too, for she was heavily laden with agricultural implements and other machinery for Rio de Janeiro.

"Better stir your stumps, my lads," said a good-natured-looking seaman, passing below them at the moment. "I guess the cap'n's waitin' fer you aft. There he is yonder, standing at the break of the poop. He wouldn't mind throwin' a belayin'-pin at your heads if you put him out. Better hustle aft at once."

"Come on, Sam," said Dick. "Perhaps the captain will explain things. There is certainly some mistake about our being here."

Dick sprang down on deck by way of the short ladder in front of the forecastle hatch, and started aft, with Sam at his heels.

Captain Caulder had his eye on them as they advanced.

He leaned upon the railing of the poop and glared down at them when they came to a halt within speaking distance.

"Now, you young lubbers," he said, with one of his customary imprecations, "you know you're shipped as landsmen, and the quicker you shake yourselves into place the better it will be for you both. I'm a man of few words, recollect that, you pesky varmints. When I say a thing I mean it, and if you don't obey quicker than greased electricity ye'll wish you had never been born."

"Why, we haven't shipped on this vessel," replied Dick. "We're not sailors."

"What's that? Tell me I lie, do you? I say you have shipped. If you open your jaws again I'll come down there and knock the daylights out of you both."

The captain's attitude was so aggressive that Dick kept quiet.

"Where's Mr. Nutter?" snorted the skipper.

"Who's he?" asked Dick.

"The mate who routed you out o' the fo'cas'l, you lubber!"

"We left him there."

"He seems to be takin' his time," snarled the captain.

At that moment the mate was seen driving Bill Spurgeon out of the forecastle hatch with the rope's-end.

Apparently he was taking satisfaction out of the sailor for the damage the boys had done him, and Spurgeon knew better than to resent the attack.

The mate drove the sailor aft, and when he came within reach of Dick and Sam he struck each of them a heavy blow with the knotted rope.

To the astonishment of both Spurgeon and the skipper, the boys sprang at the mate like young catamounts, and he had all he could do to defend himself.

Captain Caulder called two seamen up to seize the boys.

While the sailors held Dick and Sam the furious mate gave them a tremendous drubbing with the rope, until the boys fell, moaning and fainting, to the deck.

"Get up!" roared the mate.

He gave each a tremendous blow on the back.

This was the last straw to their endurance, and both boys rolled over insensible.

When Dick recovered his senses again the brig was much farther down the bay.

He found himself lying, sore and bruised, in a bunk in the forecastle.

Sam was lying in the next bunk, also sore and bruised, but not yet conscious.

Dick, as he lay there, thinking, realized that he and his chum were up against it pretty hard.

It was clear to him now that they had put their foot in it when they stopped at the Fisherman's Rest roadhouse.

The landlord had worked some hocus-pocus game upon them that had resulted in their transfer from the second-story room to the forecastle of the brig.

Just how this matter had been effected Dick was unable to guess, but it had been put through, and they would have to grin and bear their hard luck, or take more thumpings from the knotted end of the rope.

While Dick was figuring things up Sam recovered his senses.

"Oh, heavens!" he groaned. "Talk about being as sore as a boil—I'm sore as two boils!"

"Hello, Sam! Have you come to life?" asked Dick.

"That you, Dick? Have I come to life? I believe I'd feel better if I was dead. How do you feel?"

"Let's talk about something pleasanter. Sit up and let's see what we're going to do."

With many groans and wry faces, Sam sat up in his bunk, with his feet outside.

"This scrape is worse by a whole lot than being at the academy," said Sam.

"I'll admit it is, though we did think that was about the worst ever."

"That was because we didn't know any better. Now we're where we can't run away, unless we jump overboard, and we're too far from shore to make it by swimming."

"I'd like to know where the vessel is bound. Maybe we're on the way to Europe."

"Oh, heavens! We'll be done up before we get halfway there."

"We will if we get many more beatings like we had to-day."

While they were talking the forecastle hatch was darkened by the form of one of the crew coming down.

This individual proved to be Bill Spurgeon.

He came over and looked at the boys with a long-drawn chuckle.

"Well, my hearties, how do you feel?"

"How do you suppose we feel?" replied Dick sourly.

"I reckon ye feel kinder sore and bunged up. It'll be a lesson to ye not to strike an officer ag'in. It's a wonder he didn't kill ye. I've known of many a man who made food for sharks for less than that. Ye got off lucky, I kin tell ye."

"How came you aboard this ship?"

"It isn't a ship, sonny, but a brig—the brig Malta, Cap'n Caulder."

"Where is she going?"

"She's bound for Rio."

"Rio? Where's that?"

"South America, you ignoramus!"

"Do you mean Rio de Janeiro?"

"That's just what I mean, but it's always called Rio."

"You didn't say how you came aboard."

"I was shanghaied, like yourselves."

"What's shanghaied?"

"Doped, and put aboard an outward bound hooker."

"Doped! That means drugged."

Bill Spurgeon nodded.

"Didn't you make a kick?"

"What's the use? If I had opened my jaw I'd have got the soft end of a belayin'-pin alongside the head. When I found how things stood I jest said nothin' and made the best of a bad job. If ye'd acted sensible, ye wouldn't have got licked. I heard the mate say he'd pickle ye when ye come on deck again, if ye opened yer traps to him. A nod ought to be as good as a wink to a blind horse; so if ye're wise ye'll take the hint. As ye've got to learn the business, ye must expect more kicks than ha'pence. Ye can't escape 'em, fer ye're bound to do things wrong till ye larn how to do 'em right. Ye're in the mate's bad books, and ye don't stand well with the skipper, either. I don't envy ye much. If ye don't jump overboard afore ye reach Rio ye'll be lucky."

With that comforting remark Bill Spurgeon left them.

Shortly afterward one of the regularly shipped men came down the ladder.

"Don't you want your dinner, my lads?" he asked.

At those words Dick and Sam realized that they were hungry.

They had not had any breakfast, and it was now a bit past midday.

"Where do we get dinner?" asked Dick, who, like Sam, was ignorant of ship usage.

"At the galley."

"Where is the galley?"

"You are a pair of lubbers for a fact. Follow me and I'll show you."

It required considerable of an effort for Dick and Sam to follow the seaman out of the forecastle.

But they managed to reach the galley, where the cook provided them with a meal.

After they had eaten it they limped back to the forecastle, and were not disturbed for the rest of the day.

At dark the brig was off the capes, headed out to sea, with the lights of Old Point Comfort miles away on her starboard counter.

CHAPTER V.

LEFT TO THEIR FATE.

Next morning, when the mate came down into the forecastle to rout the boys out he found them both seasick.

He threatened to lambast them again if they didn't stir their stumps, but his threat had no effect on the boys, who were in such condition that they didn't care whether they were thrown overboard or not.

This was the first time in their lives that death had no particular terrors for them.

Seeing that they would be thoroughly useless, and only in the way on deck in their present condition, the mate left them and reported the bad shape they were in to Captain Caulder.

The skipper swore some, but as the brig was in the grasp of a small gale, he soon forgot about the boys.

It blew hard all day, and the brig pitched and rolled like a chip at the mercy of the waves.

Dick and Sam lay in their bunks, pictures of misery.

Nobody bothered about them, except Bill Spurgeon.

He jeered at them, and gloated over their unhappy state.

They paid no attention to him, and so the day passed.

Of course they couldn't eat anything, and night brought them no relief.

Next morning the gale had blown itself out, though the sea was running high.

The mate came down and hustled them out of their bunks with blows and imprecations.

They crawled on deck, looking more dead than alive, but the sea air made them feel a bit better, though they staggered around feeling as weak as cats.

The mate fitted them out with sea-going togs from the slop chest, took Dick into his watch, and turned Sam over to the second mate.

In spite of the miserable shape they were in they were forced to hustle, and by degrees their sickness left them and they were able to eat a fairly hearty supper.

Next morning they were all right once more, and Dick, as a member of the chief mate's watch, helped wash down the deck.

For three days the weather held fine, and the boys were gradually broken into routine life aboard the brig.

The mate, however, never lost a chance to lay his rope's end on their backs, or about their legs.

He was taking his revenge on them for the blows they had given him that first morning.

Dick and Sam saw that it would not be well for them to resent this treatment, for they were at the mercy of their tyrant, and he was in a position to make things so hot for them that death would be a welcome relief to their sufferings.

So they made the best of things, and the mate gradually let up on them when he found they were doing the best they could and saying nothing.

On the afternoon of the fourth day, as the brig was approaching the Bahama Islands, the weather turned bad, and the barometer gave notice of a coming storm.

Sail was greatly reduced on the vessel, and ere long the first of the gale struck her and she began to plunge about on the waves like a restless colt.

As the afternoon advanced the gale grew worse and worse.

The brig, being an old craft, and heavily laden, labored greatly in the heavy seas that bore down upon her and frequently swept her deck.

After the men had had their supper life lines were stretched across the deck to save the sailors from being carried overboard by the inrushing water.

Along about dark a tremendous wave struck the port bulwarks a terrible blow and carried away a good portion of the woodwork, which was weak, and almost rotten in places.

That gave a better opening for the water to sweep the deck, and from that time on it was nearly always awash.

Both watches being required to be on deck to handle the brig under the strenuous circumstances, Dick and Sam came together, and took refuge under the shadow of the poop, where they clung desperately to one of the life lines whenever the waves came aboard, which was every minute or so.

"Say! this is fierce, Dick!" shouted Sam in his companion's ear, for such was the uproar of the tempest that

ordinary tones could not be heard even at the closest range. "Do you think we'll come out of this alive?"

"It doesn't look as if we would," replied Dick; "but I can't tell whether we're in danger or not. Every time the brig makes a plunge I've been expecting to see her keep right on under, which would mean the last of us. Yet up she comes again, shaking the water from her bows, like a dripping dog. I'd give something to be back again in Oriole Academy, even if I had to go on a diet of bread and water for a month."

"How d'ye like it, my hearties?" cried a hoarse voice in their ears, as Bill Spurgeon joined them.

"We don't like it a little bit," replied Dick.

"Ho! ho! ho!" croaked the sailor.

"This is the worst storm I ever saw in my life," said Sam.

"This is only a capful of wind," chuckled Spurgeon. "Jest wait till ye see a real storm."

"A real storm! I think this is real enough. I don't want to see any worse."

"It will be a sight worse afore mornin'."

"Then the brig will surely go to the bottom with all hands," said Dick.

"Mayhap she will," replied Spurgeon, without his former mirth. "She's an old tub, and loaded to the hatches with a heavy cargo. I ain't got no confidence in her."

That was certainly cheerful intelligence, coming as it did from an experienced old salt, and Dick and Sam took a gloomier view of the situation.

Every moment the storm seemed to increase in violence.

The wind shrieked, roared and howled like the outburst of a million airy fiends.

What little canvas had been left exposed aloft was torn from the bolt ropes, leaving only tattered strips fluttering from the yards.

The brig plunged and rolled in what seemed a frightful manner to the boys, who believed that they never would see daylight again.

They were wet to the skin, and shivered under the chilliness of the blast.

Thus hours passed away, and the Malta still blundered on her course.

Suddenly the wind veered around to another quarter as the first streaks of dawn appeared in the East.

It didn't come as heavy as before, but it created a nasty cross sea that made the vessel roll worse than ever.

Another hour passed, and it was clear that the gale had blown itself out.

Everybody aboard took new courage as things began to look brighter.

Daylight showed the destruction the storm had wrought in the brig.

Sails in rags, cordage hanging broken from the masts, the port bulwarks badly smashed, and the deck covered with the debris.

"Now, my lads, up aloft!" cried the captain. "We'll have that main-to'-gallan' spar down. I can see it's sprung from here."

Most of the hands sprang aloft, several to attend to the sprung spar, the others with their knives ready to cut away the ragged canvas, after which they began splicing the snapped cordage.

Dick and Sam were ordered to unship the life lines and clear the deck of the rubbish.

Spare sails were got up to take the place of those the gale had destroyed, while the cook lighted the galley fire and started to prepare coffee for the men.

While the brig presented a busy scene fore and aft, the captain called the chief mate and ordered him to sound the well.

This was a necessary precaution after such a heavy blow, especially with such an old craft as the Malta.

There was little doubt but she must have taken in some water, and the skipper's experienced eye, noting her labored rising after each plunge, judged she had shipped quite a bit.

The mate was not away long.

When he returned to the poop he said to the captain in a low tone:

"Six feet of water below, and gaining fast. She's leaking like a sieve!"

Bill Spurgeon was close behind the two men and heard what the mate said.

He seemed panic-stricken.

Rushing to the poop-rail, he roared out:

"Boats out, lads! The hooker is sinkin' under us!"

His stentorian, panic-breeding shout rang like a trumpet call above the whistling wind and rasping cordage.

With shouts of terror and dismay, the men aloft quit work on the instant and slid down the shrouds to the deck, while those on deck, with one accord, made a rush for the nearest boat.

"You infernal rascal!" roared the skipper, striking Spurgeon a blow that sent him head foremost from the poop-rail to the deck, where for a few moments he lay dazed.

To his chief mate he said:

"Tell off four hands to work the pumps, and drive the others back to their duties."

The mate hastened to obey these orders, but the men received them in sulky defiance, declaring that they were not going to go down with the cranky old hooker.

When the skipper saw these tokens of mutiny he sent the second officer for his revolvers.

As soon as they were in his hands he jumped down, and rushing to the starboard boats, which the men were endeavoring to lower, ordered the sailors to haul off.

A low, ominous growl came from the men, and not one budged.

Captain Caulder forced his way to the nearest davit, and seizing the tackle, cried:

"Back, men! To the pumps! The brig can be saved!"

"Go and man the pumps yourself!" shouted Bill Spurgeon, who, having regained his feet, had sprung over to the side of the demoralized crew.

"You mutinous dog!" hissed the skipper. "Am I not captain of this brig?"

"Of course ye are; and ye kin go down with her, if ye choose." Then turning to the men, he cried: "To the port boats, my lads! We ain't got no time to lose. The brig is sinkin' right under us every minute!"

"Stop!" roared Captain Caulder, as the crew started to follow Spurgeon.

Instinctively the men obeyed, standing in hesitating and sullen defiance.

"Look here, you mutinous rascals!" he continued. "I have charge of this brig, and she shall be stuck to as long as there is a ghost of a chance to keep her afloat! Go, four of you, to the pumps, and the rest return to your work!"

"She'll sink inside of fifteen minutes!" snarled Spurgeon.

"Villain! I'll have you put in irons!" returned the captain.

Spurgeon laughed derisively.

"Come on, lads, follow me!"

As the men made a movement toward the port side the skipper yelled:

"I'll shoot the first man that makes for the boats!"

"Then shoot me!" sneered Spurgeon, starting to cross the deck.

Crack!

Captain Caulder had taken a hasty aim at the rebellious sailor and fired.

The bullet missed its mark, but entered the brain of a man close by, who, with a wild shriek, staggered back and fell to the deck dead.

The shot enraged the men.

"Down with the cap'n!" roared Spurgeon. "He has murdered Tom Jones!"

With howls of rage the men rushed at the skipper.

Crack! crack! crack! spoke his weapon.

Two men went down, one mortally hurt, the other seriously.

Then the rush overwhelmed the captain, and the mate, also, who had sprung to his aid.

There was the sound of blows, then the captain's body rose in the air and was flung into the sea.

The chief mate was pummeled into insensibility and left in the scupper.

The second mate was prevented from interfering.

"To the boats, lads! To the boats, for your lives!" shouted Spurgeon. "I'm cap'n now! Get water and provisions from the galley, not forgettin' a demijohn of rum! Now, then, work lively! The old hooker may go down any minute!"

The men scattered and got busy.

Dick and Sam had taken no part in the proceedings, but remained aloof, staggered by the desperate look of things.

They sympathized with the men, for they had received only abuse from the skipper and his chief officer since they were brought aboard the vessel.

Moreover, they believed the brig was sinking under them,

and they were badly scared at the thought of going to the bottom with her.

The overthrow of the captain and mate put an end to all discipline.

While some of the men, under the leadership of Spurgeon, got two boats ready for launching, the rest brought water and provisions to put into them.

The boys, who did not know what to do in this crisis, were pushed and shoved about as though they were useless bits of lading.

They waited eagerly for a chance to get into one of the boats as soon as they were lowered overboard.

Inside of ten minutes the boats were ready for launching, and were then lowered away.

The moment they struck the water the crew swarmed into them.

Dick and Sam brought up in the rear of the men who were tumbling into Spurgeon's boat.

As they essayed to follow, the rascal's sharp eyes singled them out.

"Back! back! ye young sculpins! We've got too many aboard now! Lower one of the port boats fer yerselves, and he hanged to ye!"

As he spoke he lifted the oar he was using in fending off, and struck the boys on the chest with it, sweeping them from the bulwarks to the deck.

Wild with terror at the idea of being left behind on the sinking brig, Dick and Sam scrambled back onto the bulwarks.

By that time the two boats, loaded with the crew, were a dozen feet away from the vessel's side and rapidly increasing the distance.

"Help! Save us!" cried Sam frantically.

The only reply was a mocking laugh from Bill Spurgeon, coupled with an invitation to go to blazes.

"We are lost—lost!" moaned Sam, as he gazed despairingly after the receding boats.

CHAPTER VI.

LOST IN THE TROPICS.

"Oh, heavens! What are we going to do?" gurgled Sam, watching the retreating boats with staring eyes.

Dick, like his chum, had too little sea experience to know what to do under the terrible circumstances.

Both clung to the bulwarks with a despairing grip, rising into the air one moment and descending toward the water the next, as the brig rolled to port and then back again to starboard.

The second mate had been taken off in one of the boats, but the chief officer lay where the rascals had thrown him down in the starboard scupper.

"We'll be drowned like rats in a trap!" groaned Sam. "The cowardly villains! to leave us to perish out here in mid-ocean! It's an outrage!"

"Let's see if we can't lower one of the remaining boats," said Dick. "We must do something to get away from this sinking craft."

He sprang to the deck, and Sam followed him.

Rushing over to one of the port boats, they discovered, to their dismay, that a big hole was stove in its bottom.

The other boat seemed all right, but on trying to unship the tackle they found the ropes so jammed that they could do nothing with them.

"That settles it! We're doomed!" said Sam despairingly.

"Hold on! There's a small boat lashed on the roof of the galley," said Dick. "We will get that down and shove it overboard through the break in the port bulwarks."

Dick led the way to the stop of the galley house, and with their knives the boys hacked away at the strong, tarry lashings that held the little craft tight to the roof fore and aft.

They worked with anxious haste because it seemed to them that the brig was very low in the water, as indeed she was, for she was making water fast.

At last the lashings were cut through and they lowered the boat to the deck.

They released the oars, and then set about getting some water and provisions.

The crew had almost cleaned out the pantry, so that there was little left for them.

The remainder of the provisions was in the brig's laza-

rette, but the boys knew nothing about that receptacle under the cabin floor.

They filled half a dozen empty bottles, and a can or two with water from the cask outside the galley, and that was the best they could do in that direction.

"Now we've got to get her into the water," said Dick. "That's a ticklish job for us. If we don't do it at the right moment, when the brig dips to port, we'll upset her, and lose the little food and water we have aboard."

"Hello!" exclaimed Sam at that moment. "Who's that lying in the scupper?"

Dick looked where his companion pointed, and saw the form of a man doubled up close to the starboard bulwark.

He seemed to be dead, but they were not sure of that.

The excitement and anxiety they had been laboring under prevented them noticing the body before.

"It's one of the mates," said Dick, starting over to the spot.

"It's the chief mate, then, for I saw Mr. Brewer in one of the boats as they left us in the lurch," said Sam.

It was the chief mate, as the reader knows, and the boys recognized him as soon as they reached his side.

"He's alive," said Dick. "We can't leave him to drown on the brig. Help me carry him over to the boat."

Sam grabbed the mate by one arm, while Dick seized him by the other.

Between them they dragged the unconscious man across the deck to the spot where the boat lay.

Placing him in the boat, with his legs under one of the seats so as to hold him steady, they shoved the boat close to one of the bulwark openings.

After watching the rise and fall of the brig, whose movements were now extremely sluggish, for she was dangerously full of water by this time, and noting the exact moment when the boat ought to be launched, they finally shoved it into the sea.

To their great satisfaction the launching was successful.

The next time the brig dipped to port they sprang into the little craft, and, grabbing the oars, rowed away from the doomed craft.

"We didn't get away from her any too quick," said Dick, as they paused some yards away and looked back. "Look how low she is in the water! I don't see how she floats! I think we can bless our stars that we were able to get away as soon as we did."

A low, rumbling noise reached their ears at that moment.

This was followed by a loud explosion as the compressed air between decks blew off the battened-down main hatch.

It was this air, which, acting like the gas in a balloon, had materially helped in keeping the heavily laden brig afloat.

With its escape the vessel's bows arose high in the air, then she dove forward, like a porpoise taking a header, and sank slowly out of sight into the depths of the ocean.

"That's the end of her," said Dick. "And it makes me shiver to think how near we were to going down with her."

"That's right," muttered Sam, not a little impressed by their narrow escape.

With the brig gone, nothing greeted their eyes but a vast expanse of blue, rolling water on every side.

As far as they could see, they were alone on the boundless deep.

The boys had not the slightest idea where they were, but as a matter of fact they were in tropical waters, a few miles to the northward of the long string of islands known as the Bahama group.

"How shall we head?" asked Sam.

"We'll keep her head up to the wind. In fact, we've got to do that, or take the risk of being capsized," replied Dick.

"The storm is over; why don't the sea become calm?"

"Ask me something easier, Sam. I believe the ocean is always rough for hours after a gale of any kind, and we've come through a heavy one."

"I wonder where the other boats are?"

"Miles away by this time."

"I suppose we can count on being picked up by some vessel?"

"I hope so; but a vessel might pass close to this spot without any one on board making out this small boat. We are only a speck on the ocean, and specks don't count for much in such a tremendous space of water."

"Oh, heavens! You give me the chills!" faltered Sam.

"While I row just dash some water in the mate's face and try to bring him to," said Dick.

Sam proceeded to do as he was requested, but he found it impossible to arouse consciousness in the man.

"He looks to me as if he wasn't going to live," said Sam at length, desisting from his efforts. "He's breathing, but that is about all."

"The crew must have pounded him bad when they jumped on Captain Caulder."

"They certainly did. I guess they hardly realized what they were about; otherwise, I don't think they would have thrown the skipper overboard."

"The shooting of Tom Jones did the business. The sailors were in a bad temper, and that exasperated them beyond control."

"The skipper was a hard case. He handled us without gloves, and so did this man. If we hadn't minded our p's and q's very close, it is hard to say what they might not have done to us. I'll never forget that cowardly beating this chap gave us the first morning while we were held by the sailors. It makes my blood boil to think of it. If I'd been free, and had a weapon, I believe I'd have tried to kill him. He's a brute, and he'd been served rightly if he went down with the brig."

"Well, we didn't let him go down with the vessel. It's better to return good for evil in this world. A fellow always feels better if he can heap coals of fire on his enemy's head, as the Bible has it."

"I guess you're more forgiving than me. I doubt if I'd have taken him off had I been alone."

"You probably wouldn't have been able to."

The sun rose higher and higher in the heavens, and the boys soon became sensible of its heat.

The clouds that had covered the sky at dawn were now gone, and Old Sol had full swing.

The sea, however, seemed as rough as ever.

The waves were sweeping the little boat southward, though the boys were not cognizant of that fact.

They rowed against the waves in a mechanical manner, more for the purpose of keeping the boat's head up to the wind.

It wasn't long before hunger and thirst made the boys aware that they had eaten nothing since the night before.

Accordingly they sampled their stock of provisions, drinking sparingly of the water, for they had but a scanty supply.

The day seemed unusually long to them, but it came to an end at last.

Sam made two other attempts to revive the mate, but the man, unknown to them, was suffering from a fracture near the base of the brain, resulting from a blow one of the infuriated sailors had given him with an iron belaying-pin, and it was only a question of time when death would intervene.

Had daylight lasted another hour the boys would have sighted a low-lying tropical island that lay directly in their path.

The waves had gone down a great deal by sunset, and the boys congratulated themselves over the prospect of a smooth ocean on the following day, together with the chance of a possible rescue, for hope springs up continually in the human breast, no matter how discouraging the outlook may be.

The heavens were brilliant with stars, though there was no moon, and as Dick and Sam looked up at the sparkling vault they were deeply impressed with the immensity of space, and their own unimportance, lost as they were on the confines of a tropical sea, the area of which seemed boundless.

As the night progressed conversation flagged, and the boys reclined, half asleep, in rather uncomfortable attitudes.

Unknown to them, they were drawing nearer and nearer to the tropical island.

Suddenly the boat was caught in the grasp of a breaker, rushed swiftly forward, lifted into the air, and turned over, dumping the boys most unexpectedly into the sea.

CHAPTER VII.

ASHORE ON TURTLE KEY.

Dick and Sam were dazed by their unlooked-for plunge into the sea, and their senses were still further bewildered by the rolling over they got in the surf.

Had they had their wits about them they might have

scrambled free of the undertow and escaped from the maw of the receding water.

Before they realized that they had been cast upon a shore unknown to them, both they, the boat, and the body of the almost dead mate, were drawn by a powerful influence they could no more resist than they could fly.

Before they had gone far, an inrushing wave captured and bore them islandward again.

They were tossed through the surf this time like a couple of pebbles and rolled some way up the beach.

Feeling solid ground under them, they instinctively dug their hands and feet into the sand, and the water receded without them.

They lay there, panting, and wondering where they were.

The next wave was a short one, that rolled all about them but had no power to dislodge them.

Another big wave was coming, when Dick scrambled up, and seizing Sam by the arm, dragged him several yards up the shelving shore.

Sam spat out a mouthful of moist sand and sea-water and sat up.

"What the dickens has happened to us?" he sputtered.

"We've gone ashore somewhere," replied Dick.

"Where's the boat?"

"Blessed if I know where it is!"

"I wonder what land this is? I thought we were in the middle of the ocean, miles away from any land!"

"That was my idea, too," replied Dick. "We must be ashore somewhere along the coast of the United States."

"Then we're as good as saved, after all," said Sam, feeling quite encouraged. "See any lights anywhere?"

"Nary a light. I can see some funny-looking trees—a stem, with leafy tops."

"Oh, shoot the trees! What I'd like to see is a house."

"Get up! We'll walk higher up the beach, and see what we can make out."

Sam arose with alacrity.

"It's blamed funny we should strike the shore so soon. When the sun went down, not so many hours ago, there wasn't anything in sight but water. I was sick of looking at it, for we've seen nothing else since the brig went down."

"Well, it is singular, I'm bound to admit. Hello! There's a whole lot of water yonder. Say, this must be an island we've struck, and not the States at all!"

"That doesn't follow. This may be a long tongue of land extending out into the sea."

"These trees look like tropical ones," said Dick, pointing to half a dozen plantains that stood like a row of sentinels in front of them.

"Maybe this is the lower coast of Florida," hazarded Sam.

"I don't believe it's the coast of anything. I believe it's an island."

"If it's an island, there may be nobody on it, and then we'll stand a good chance of starving to death, for our provisions and water have gone with the boat."

As this possibility presented itself to Sam his enthusiasm began to ooze away.

They might not be as good as saved, after all!

"Don't begin looking for trouble right off, old man. I'd rather feel solid ground under me than be floating about in that boat on a wide sea. At any rate, while life lasts there's hope, so pin your faith to that," replied Dick cheerfully.

Although they were soaked to the skin, they did not feel so very uncomfortable, owing to the warmth of the tropical night air.

Besides, while they kept in motion the exercise sent the warm blood coursing through their veins, and overcame any sense of chilliness.

In the hope of finding against some evidence of civilization, or learning for certain if they had been cast upon an island, the boys tramped along, their feet sinking deep in a luxuriant carpet of tropical vegetation, meeting more plantain-trees and an occasional palm.

Presently a thick growth of banana-trees barred their further progress.

They could easily have forced a passage for themselves, but preferred to skirt the grove, taking no heed of the bunches of juicy fruit ripening in the shadows of the big, trailing leaves.

With the return of daylight they would learn that they were in no danger of starving to death on this island.

Walking along the edge of the grove, with the wide, sandy shore and the boiling surf on the other side, they suddenly

came upon a rude hut, built of poles, boards, and palm branches, and anchored firmly to four plantain-trees which grew in the shape of a small square.

"Hurrah!" shouted Sam, as soon as his eyes lighted on the hut. "Here's a house!"

"A hut, you mean; for it doesn't seem to amount to a whole lot."

"I don't care what it is. It's a sign that people have been here, if they aren't here now."

"No doubt about that. The hut couldn't have built itself. It looks as if it was tenantless."

As they drew near the hut they could discover no signs of recent occupation.

Clearly it had been abandoned by the person or persons who erected it.

There was a peculiar kind of furrow, plainly marked in the sand, that led directly up from the beach to the door of the hut, where it doubled on itself and returned to the shore.

It looked as if it had been made by some ponderous marine animal with a flat belly, that had dragged itself up there from the water's edge and then returned by a parallel course.

There was no door to the hut, just a narrow opening, through which the boys peered when they reached it.

The interior was pitch dark, and all the boys could make out was that the floor consisted of dried vegetation.

"There's nothing to brag of about this home-made structure," said Dick. "Most anybody could put such a shack together if he had the few materials at hand. It looks inviting enough for us to pass the night in. I move we take possession, for I'm feeling dead tired."

"We can't sleep in our wet clothes, and if we take them off what have we got to cover ourselves with?"

"Well, then, instead of sleeping in the hut, we can dig a trench on the shore and cover ourselves with sand. I bet that'll keep us warm."

Sam agreed that Dick's proposal was worth trying, so they got out of their damp garments, laid them out on the turf to dry, and then, burrowing into the sand, which felt warm and pleasant after having been exposed all day to a tropical sun, fatigue soon closed their eyes in deep slumber.

It might have been an hour later that Sam was awakened by a rough blow on the side of the head.

Some large, unwieldy object was paddling its way through the sand close beside him.

To his startled eyes it looked twice as big as it really was, though in good truth it was big enough.

The animal, or whatever it was, seemed to be encased in a kind of heavy armor, through which protruded two scaly flippers on the side nearest Sam, which furnished its motive power.

Sam was so frightened by the strange apparition that he let out a yell and scrambled out of his bed of sand with surprising expertness.

His cry seemed to alarm the animal, or whatever it was, for it swung around and made off down the beach toward the water with great swiftness, disappearing into the surf with a splash.

Dick, aroused by his companion's yell, sat up and rubbed his eyes.

"What's the trouble, Sam?" he inquired, seeing his chum standing up and looking intently at the water.

"Oh, heavens! Don't ask me. Some beast out of the sea was just up here, and I wouldn't be surprised if he was going to make a meal off us."

"I guess you were dreaming."

"I was, like fun! It gave me a clip alongside the head that woke me up. Then I saw it. It was as big as a house, with paws large enough to tear a person to pieces. I must have given it a scare, for it skipped down the beach in a brace of shakes and plunged into the water."

"What did it look like?" asked Dick.

"Some horrible, ungainly animal; but it must live in the sea, for it went right into it as if it was used to it."

"Some strange sea animal, eh? I guess—"

"There's another one of them!" exclaimed Sam, pointing at something moving along the beach.

Dick looked at it intently.

"Why, that's a turtle!" he said.

"A turtle!" cried Sam. "By gosh! You're right! It was a corking big one that woke me up. I'll admit I was badly scared, for I didn't recognize just what it was. This

must be a regular stamping-ground for them, for there are two more yonder. Hadn't we better finish our sleep inside the hut? If one of those amphibious things crawled over us while we slept it would smother us in a twinkling."

Dick agreed with his chum, and they adjourned to the hut, where they passed the rest of the night.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE STRANDED SCHOONER.

The sun was well up when Dick opened his eyes next morning.

Sam was still in dreamland, a few feet away.

Every square foot of the interior of the rude hut was now discernible.

Dick saw that it contained quite an assortment of nautical odds and ends, such as rope, blocks, a kedge-anchor, wood poles with blunt-pointed iron heads, and other articles, including a ship's lantern with part of a candle in it.

It looked more like a storehouse for marine junk than a habitation.

"I suppose the person or persons who put up this hut were wrecked here, and they collected all this stuff from the beach. When they were taken off by some vessel—for I'm satisfied this is an island—they left the collection behind them."

Dick walked outside and found his clothes and Sam's as dry as tinder, so he lost no time dressing himself.

The surface of the sea had calmed down to a vast field of rippling waves that reflected the sun's rays with a dazzling glare.

A gentle breeze whispered among the banana-trees in the grove behind, and on either side of the hut, and lightly rustled the leaves of the plantains and palms.

The vegetation along the center of the island looked brightly green, while the beach lay hard and smooth and white.

Taken altogether, it was a pretty picture to the unaccustomed eyes of Dick.

As he looked around he spied luscious bunches of bananas ripening in the sun and in the shade of the long, pendant leaves.

The sight of them made him feel hungry, and he was soon munching the fruit with great satisfaction.

While he was thus engaged Sam came to the door of the hut and looked out.

He noticed Dick standing a few yards away working his jaws over something.

"Hello, Dick! What are you eating?"

"Bananas. There are enough around here to feed a small army. Get into your clothes and come over and help yourself."

Sam didn't need a second invitation, for his appetite was on edge, and before five minutes had elapsed he had a fat banana between his teeth.

"Gee! this tastes good, all right!" he said.

"No fear of our starving around here," replied Dick.

"I should say not. If this is an island, it must be a tropical one. I did not think we were so far south."

"I'm pretty well satisfied it's an island. At any rate, we'll soon find out."

"I hope we find somebody living on it. I don't like the idea of being cast ashore on an uninhabited island. Seems as if there'd be less chance of getting off."

They talked about their chances of getting back to the States again until they had satisfied their hunger, then they started to explore the place thoroughly.

As soon as they had skirted the banana grove the sight of water on all sides through the trees ahead showed them that they were indeed on an island, and a small one, at that.

Indeed, it was of so little importance that it was not indicated on many maps by its name, Turtle Key, but was put down as one of a string of dots known by the general title of Keys.

"I was right, after all," said Dick. "It is an island."

"And an uninhabited one, at that, as far as we can make out."

"It's inhabited now by us."

"I hope we won't enjoy the honor long. I was not built for a Robinson Crusoe."

LOST IN THE TROPICS.

"Nor I, either. I prefer to be among the up-to-date evidences of modern civilization."

Just before the boys reached the extreme end of the little island in this direction they came to a small grove of plantain-trees rising fifteen or twenty feet in the air.

Long, narrow leaves drooped from the top of each, and among these nestled the fruit which the natives use as a substitute for bread.

The heat of the sun and the exertion of walking had made the boys so thirsty that water seemed absolutely necessary.

Where were they to get drinkable water? was the serious problem that presented itself to them.

"Bananas are all right in their way, but we can't live without drinking," said Sam.

"As this is a tropical island, we may find some cocoanut-trees on it," replied Dick, though he wasn't overconfident, for they had covered the island already from end to end and had noticed nothing that looked like a cocoanut-tree as they knew it by the pictures they had seen in books.

Still, they had traversed a part of the island in the dark, and had not looked at the trees with particular attention.

They pushed into the plantain grove to rest under the shade of the leaves, when, to their surprise and delight, they came upon a small natural spring which gushed out of a mass of solid rock.

With a yell of pleasure both boys stuck their heads down to a kind of basin, holding perhaps half a gallon of water, and drank of the cool liquid until they had satisfied their thirst.

"Talk about luck! It couldn't be better," said Dick. "Now that we have an inexhaustible supply of water, we're all right."

"I'd like to have some other diet than bananas altogether. What kind of fruit is it that we see in these trees?"

"I give it up. The only way to learn is to sample it."

Dick climbed one of the plantains and tossed down some of the fruit.

In its raw state the fruit, even when dead ripe, is not very palatable, especially to a person unused to the taste, and consequently Dick and Sam were disappointed when they sampled the specimens they got hold of.

"I guess it ain't ripe yet," said Dick, making a wry face over his first mouthful.

"Ripe! I should say not!" snorted Sam, throwing his away in disgust.

After resting themselves, and taking another drink, they pushed out through the grove and found facing them the continuation of the beach which encircled the island.

Here, washed up on the shore, they found the recent wreck of a small vessel, which looked as if it had been schooner rigged, for the stumps of two masts appeared above the level of the deck.

"I guess that storm we were in wrecked that craft," said Dick as the two boys stood looking at the remains of the luckless vessel.

"Let's see what's aboard of her," suggested Sam.

As Dick was as curious as his chum about what might be inside the stranded hull, he led the way on board.

They entered the after part through a small sliding doorway.

The space was pretty dark, but as soon as their eyes became accustomed to the gloom they saw four open bunks, two on either side, filled with rumpled and not very clean blankets.

"Looks as if the people who were sleeping in them had tumbled out in a hurry," said Sam.

"Probably the storm caught them off their guard, and they hustled to save their vessel."

"It is clear that they didn't save her, and as they are not on the island themselves, the chances are they were lost overboard when she struck."

The lockers under the two lower bunks were filled with clothing of light texture, and all sorts of personal belongings.

They found other lockers filled with knives, forks, spoons, plates, cups and saucers, charts in Spanish, books in the same language, and a lot of other things too numerous to mention.

Forward they discovered a small space in the bows filled with a cook stove, pots, pans, and various odds and ends connected with the kitchen department.

The space between the cabin bulkhead and the galley par-

tition, or main hold, was full of bags of potatoes mostly, with a few casks of molasses.

Dick, in rummaging around the ill-smelling cook-room, found a dozen boxes of matches, and put them in his pocket.

"There are a number of articles aboard this wreck that will prove useful to us if we are compelled to remain any length of time on this island," he said to Sam.

"I hope we won't be compelled to stay here long enough to make use of them," answered Sam. "We have seen the whole island now, and if we stayed a year we wouldn't find any more of it to look at."

"That's true enough. I'm glad we ran across the wreck, with its cook stove. We can try and capture a turtle now and have some cooked turtle flesh."

"That's something. I'd like to see how turtle meat tastes," said Sam. "A diet of bananas exclusively would certainly pall on our appetites pretty soon. Here's a couple of fishing-lines I've found. Maybe we can catch fish somewhere along the shore. Then we have loads of potatoes in the hold. We won't starve while we are here."

The boys decided to take up their quarters aboard the wreck, as it rested on an even keel between a bite in the shore.

Here they lived and passed a part of their time during the two weeks that followed their advent on the island.

Although they tried their best to capture a turtle at night, they failed to do so, the marine specimens being too foxy for them to outwit.

Their diet during this time consisted of fish, mussels and potatoes, with bananas for dessert.

Along the beach south of the banana grove they discovered the bleached ribs of some vessel which had gone ashore there years and years before their arrival.

The bulk of this wreck, which betokened an unwieldy craft in its original state, as compared with modern vessels, was buried in the sand.

"I'll bet that vessel was wrecked before the flood," remarked Sam, as he and Dick stood looking at the whitened timbers shining above the sand.

"It has undoubtedly been here a long time. You can tell that by the look of the exposed wood," replied Dick.

"Maybe it was wrecked here as much as fifty years ago."

"Or a hundred, perhaps."

"I don't see how any wreck could last a hundred years exposed to the action of the sea."

"There is precious little of this exposed to the sea, or the weather, either, only the ends of a few ribs. Most of the vessel, if it still exists, is protected by the sand, which has buried it practically out of sight."

"Well, never mind this wreck. What I'm interested in now is, when are we going to be taken off this island?" said Sam.

"I wish I could answer your question, but I'm as much in the dark as you are yourself. We've seen many sails in the distance—for instance, there is one yonder that seems to be drawing near us, but not one ever came anywhere near signaling distance."

"There doesn't seem to be any reason why a vessel should put in at this island," said Sam gloomily. "It is merely a long ridge of sand and rock, covered with vegetation and a few trees. The banana grove might furnish a cargo of fruit for some small craft, but probably no one knows anything about it."

The prospect of a speedy rescue seemed very poor to them, and they returned to their quarters on the stranded schooner, feeling that fate was treating them very shabbily.

CHAPTER IX.

THE TURTLE CATCHER.

Dick was generally the first to tumble out of his bunk in the morning.

Soon after sunrise on the morning following the brief conversation which closes the preceding chapter, Dick was up, as usual, ahead of his chum.

Leaving Sam snoozing in his berth, Dick started for a stroll in the direction of the hut on the northern edge of the banana grove.

He hadn't gone very far before he stopped short with a gasp of surprise.

A dirty, weather-beaten schooner was slowly approaching the island under the light breeze that then prevailed.

She was already within less than half a mile of the beach, and even as Dick looked her anchor was let go, her sails came rattling down, and she swung around with the drift of the tide until her stern pointed toward the shore.

Dick felt like shouting with joy, but restrained himself, and rushed back to the wreck and aroused his chum.

"What's the matter? Time to get up?" asked Sam sleepily.

"Turn out quick! There's a schooner close inshore! Here is the chance for us to get away from the island!"

Sam was wide awake in a moment.

The news of a vessel close inshore by which they could escape from the island made him as active in getting into his garments as a young monkey.

As soon as Sam was dressed Dick piloted him to the place whence he could catch a view of the vessel.

"Glory hallelujah!" shouted Sam. "We'll get off at last!"

At that moment a boat was lowered from the schooner's deck, and after several persons had got into her she was rowed to the beach.

"I wonder what they've come after?" asked Dick.

"What do we care what they've come after, so long as they take us off this Lord-forsaken stretch of sand?" said Sam. "Let's go forward and meet them."

Accordingly the boys walked rapidly along the beach toward the spot where they saw the boat would land.

Their presence on the island was immediately observed with surprise by those in the boat, especially by a foreign-looking, dark-skinned individual who sat in the stern and steered.

When the boat was beached Dick and Sam were close by, ready to enter into negotiations for their rescue.

"By gar!" exclaimed the foreign-looking man, who looked as much like a rascal as any man on two feet ever did, approaching the boys and coming to a stop in front of them, at the same time placing his arms akimbo. "What for you come here to dees key, eh? Dees is my island. You come to steal turtle, eh? Den I feex you pretty quick, mon enfants!"

He spoke with savage emphasis, and his look was so menacing that the boys were not only much taken aback, but somewhat intimidated.

"What are you talking about?" asked Dick, recovering his nerve. "We've got nothing to do with the turtles that come here. We couldn't steal them if we wanted to."

"Ha! Why you could not steal heem if I no come in my schoonaire?"

"Because we've got no boat."

"You have no boat?" answered the Frenchman incredulously. "No sloop or schoonaire, eh? How you come here, den?"

"We couldn't help coming here. We were cast ashore in the night."

"Aha! You tell me truth, mon enfants?" said the foreigner, his face clearing a bit.

"Yes, that is the truth," replied Dick earnestly.

The Frenchman evidently believed him, for he assumed a more friendly attitude.

"So you got wreck on dees island, eh? How long you been here?"

"A little over two weeks."

"A leetle ovaire two week. How you like ze place?" with a wicked grin.

"We're sick of it."

"You seek of heem, eh?"

"Yes. We want you to take us off."

"I think ze matter ovaire. I come here for turtle. You make yourselves useful, den I agree to take you away, dat ees eef you no tell dat dees key ees good turtle ground. Eet ees important dat I keep heem a secret. Comprenez vous?"

The boys understood, and Dick promised him that they wouldn't say a word about the island being a good turtle-catching ground.

The Frenchman grinned and held out his hand.

"You sleep in dat hut? Oui? Eet ees my hut. Everyt'ing on dees island ees mine."

"No. We sleep on a wreck at the end of the island, yonder," said Dick, waving his hand in the direction whence he and Sam had come.

The Frenchman pricked up his ears.

"You sleep on a wreck, you say, mon enfant? What ees eet a sheep?"

"No; a small schooner."

"Petite schoonaire? So? Anyt'ing in dat schoonaire?"

"Several dozen bags of potatoes and half a dozen or more heavy casks."

"Ha! Bon! I go see heem. You will come wiz me. I find heem as you say, den we are good friend. Allez!" he said sharply to his four men, who stood listening to the conversation, pointing at the hut. "Now, mon enfants, I go wiz you to ze wreck."

The trio started for the other end of the island, and soon came in sight of the stranded schooner.

"Aha! Dat ees heem, eh! Ze hull look sound. So zaire ees some dozen potato bag on board? In good condition, eh?"

"First class. We've been eating some of them."

"You eet heem? Not mooth, I hope."

"Of course not. How could we eat much of them in two weeks?"

"Ha! Oui! Perhaps you eat one hundred potato, he not count mooth."

When they reached the wreck the Frenchman merely glanced into the gloomy cabin and then made for the open hatchway.

"You make ze light for me, mon enfant?" he said to Dick.

"Sure! Go light the lantern and bring it here," Dick said to Sam.

His chum brought the lantern in a few minutes.

The Frenchman took it and flashed it about in the hold.

"Potato—oui!" he ejaculated with much satisfaction. "And dees barrel—aha! Eet ees molasses. By gar! Dees ees like what you Americaine call heem—peek up ze money. I take dees potato and molasses for ze price of your passage to Nassau, where my schoonaire, ze Jean Barbe, he go wiz ze cargo of turtle. Eet ees a bargain, mon enfants?"

"Well," said Dick, who knew that the Frenchman would make money out of the stuff in the hold of the wreck, "you could throw in the price of our fare to the States, couldn't you?"

"Throw in ze price of—what you mean?"

"We're dead broke, and we want to get back to the United States, so—"

"Ah! Oui. Je comprehends. You have nossing in your pocket. You want a leetle money? I t'ink heem ovaire. Oui, I feex heem all right. Now, mon enfants, you tell me what you call yourself—dat ees, your name."

"My name is Dick Appleton, and this is my friend, Sam Atkins."

"Vaire good. I introduce myself, too. Pierre Gerard, of ze schoonaire Jean Barbe. Now we know each ozzaire, you come aboard and take breakfas' wiz me."

"Sure we will!" replied Dick, delighted at the chance to get a square meal of something different to their late stereotyped diet.

They accompanied Pierre Gerard back to where the boat lay.

The sailors stood around waiting for him.

He held a short conversation with them in French and then ordered them into the boat.

As soon as they had taken their places he said:

"Now, mon enfants, in wiz you!"

The boys got into the boat and the captain followed.

The sailors shoved off from the beach and headed for the schooner.

It took but a few lusty strokes to put them alongside the vessel.

Three of the four sailors sprang aboard, and then the captain motioned the boys to follow.

They did so.

As Dick stepped on deck, closely followed by Sam, they came face to face with—Bill Spurgeon!

CHAPTER X.

TURTLE HUNTING.

The surprise was mutual.

Spurgeon looked at the boys as if he could hardly believe the evidence of his senses, for till that moment he had believed them to be food for the fishes.

As for the boys themselves, the last place they expected to meet Bill Spurgeon was on the deck of the turtle catcher's schooner.

The rascally sailor found his voice first.

"Well, my hearties, so ye didn't go down with the brig, did ye?"

"No, we didn't," replied Dick sourly, "though you did what you could to make us do so."

"You're dreamin', my laddybuck. We couldn't take ye off in our boat, 'cause it was full. I told ye to lower one of the port boats for yerselves."

"That was more than we could do, for there was a hole in the bottom of one, while the tackle of the other was jammed so we couldn't make it work."

The rascal grinned at Dick's explanation.

"Then how did ye manage to get off?"

"We launched the small boat on top of the galley."

"And wind and tide brought ye to this key, I suppose?"

"Key!" ejaculated Dick. "What do you mean by that?"

"This island, then, ye ignoramus! It's called Turtle Key."

"How came you to be aboard this schooner?"

"That's my business, my hearty. I'm chief mate here, so yo'd better mind your p's and q's, or overboard ye'll go to the sharks."

"We've got nothing to do with you. We're here on Captain Gerard's invitation."

"Dat ees right. I have invite them to breakfas' wiz me," chipped in the skipper, who had been listening to the conversation between Bill Spurgeon and the boys. "I see dat you know dem, Mistaire Spurgeon. So much ze bettaire. Ve vill all get along veree nicelee togezzer. Now, mon enfants, you vill follow me to ze cabin."

Dick and Sam, glad to part company with Bill Spurgeon, whose statement that he was mate of the schooner was not pleasing news to them since it was settled they were to go to the town of Nassau, on the island of New Providence, in her, hastened after the French skipper, followed by a baleful glance from Spurgeon's eyes.

Breakfast was placed on the cabin table almost immediately by the cook, a dark-skinned creole from the island of Martinique.

It was nothing to brag about as a meal, but in spite of its drawbacks the two boys enjoyed it, because it was really the best they had tasted since the treacherous supper they had partaken of at the roadhouse the night they had been shanghaied aboard the brig.

After they had finished they returned on deck and walked up and down, talking together.

Captain Gerard remained in the cabin, and when Bill Spurgeon went down to eat his breakfast the two rascals had a talk together about the boys.

The result of the powwow seemed quite satisfactory to Spurgeon, who regarded Dick and Sam with a kind of malicious satisfaction when he next came on deck.

When Captain Gerard made his appearance he ordered the anchor to be raised and sail set on the schooner.

The order was received by the crew with surprise.

Nevertheless, they got busy, under Spurgeon's directions, and the vessel was sailed around to the eastern point of the island, where she was anchored as close inshore, opposite the wreck, as the captain dared take her.

Two boats were lowered, into one of which was put tackle for breaking out the cargo of the stranded wreck.

The captain went ashore in one, Bill Spurgeon being in charge of the other.

Dick and Sam were left behind on the schooner.

A three-legged derrick was improvised and placed above the hatchway of the wreck.

The barrels of molasses were got out first.

One of these was lowered into each boat in turn and carried over to the schooner, where Spurgeon superintended their transfer to the hold of the Jean Barbe.

There were six barrels altogether, and these soon found their way aboard the Frenchman's vessel.

By midday everything the hold contained had been transferred to the schooner.

The sailors had also ransacked the cabin, carrying away with them whatever their fancy suggested.

The galley was not meddled with, though the boys had placed a bag of potatoes in it to be handy for them to cook.

Captain Gerard invited Dick and Sam to eat dinner in the cabin, and they were not slow in accepting his invitation.

"Well, mon enfants, dees mornin' you do nossing; dees afternoon you make yourself busy. You help catch turtle."

"All right," replied Dick cheerfully. "Tell us what to do, and we'll do it."

"You vill help row one of ze boat. See dat you do as you told. Turtle scare easilee. You vill go wiz Mistaire Spurgeon. He ees ze mate of dees schoonaire."

Dick and Sam did not like the idea of being under that rascal's thumb, but there was no help for it.

"I'm afraid he means to make things hot for us," said Dick, when the boys went on deck. "He's a big scoundrel, and has never forgiven that knockdown I gave him in the roadhouse."

"It's too bad he's in authority aboard this vessel," replied Sam. "It's a mystery to me how he became mate of her. However, we won't be under his thumb long."

"No, that's a consolation," answered Dick in a tone of satisfaction. "The captain said that on account of the potatoes and casks of molasses taking up so much space in his hold he will not be able to carry more than half as many turtles as he intended, so that he will have to cut short his stay at this island."

"I'm glad to hear it. We can't reach Nassau too quick to suit me," replied Sam.

As soon as Bill Spurgeon had finished his dinner two boats were cleared for action, the Frenchman taking charge of one and Spurgeon the other.

The rascally mate ordered the boys into his boat, and then gave them instructions as to how they should row as soon as a turtle was sighted.

"Mind ye don't scare the animal, or it'll be worse for ye!" he said, with a threatening shake of his head.

The necessary implements being put in the boats, all was ready for business.

Suddenly Spurgeon made a slight motion with his hand, and the four rowers behind him altered their course a little, working their oars so slowly and gently as scarcely to cause a ripple.

Notwithstanding their cautious approach, the turtle they were hunting caught sight of the boat and sank like a shot.

Spurgeon made a quick motion with his hand, and his boat's crew began to row with the utmost rapidity, striking their blades deep into the water.

The turtle gave the boat a long and exciting chase.

Finally, after half an hour of dodging about, the boat was stopped with a jerk.

Down darted Spurgeon's harpoon straight at its mark.

The turtle was speared, and the float attached to the harpoon came to the surface.

Spurgeon recovered the line and held on to it.

After a few struggles and spasmodic attempts to get away, its spirit was broken, and the tired turtle tamely allowed itself to be dragged ashore.

Bill Spurgeon put off in the boat again, without any unnecessary delay, and secured several more turtles before it became necessary to quit for the day.

CHAPTER XI.

A TREACHEROUS ACT.

For three days, weather conditions being perfect, the hunt for turtles continued, at the end of which time the skipper had obtained all the turtles he could take into his hold.

After dinner, on the fourth day, preparations were made by the crew to get under way for Nassau.

Dick and Sam, who, as usual, had dinner with the Frenchman in the cabin, were in a state of jubilation.

The hour of their departure from the measly island, as they called it, had at last arrived.

They stood well forward, watching the small crew get up the anchor, and casting what they supposed to be their final glances at the island.

Neither observed the approach of Captain Gerard and Bill Spurgeon until the skipper spoke.

"By gar! You are two lazee boy. What you t'ink, Mistaire Spurgeon, we do not want them aboard wiz us—non?"

"No, they're only in the way," replied Spurgeon, with a vindictive grin, as the surprised boy turned about. "Threw 'em overboard, and let 'em find their way to the key as best they can."

"Ovaire wiz you both!" cried Pierre Gerard, giving Dick and Sam a shove into the sea. "Now, then, swim to ^{the} island, mon enfants. By gar! You vill be luckee if ze shark do not make a meal of you!"

The boys struck the water with a double splash and went under.

In a moment or two they came to the surface, blowing water out of their mouths like a couple of grampuses.

Followed by the Frenchman's jeering laugh, the boys struck out for the shore.

The only real peril they faced was from a shark, if one happened to be in that vicinity just then.

Fortunately, they escaped that danger, and finally touched bottom and walked ashore.

By that time the Jean Barbe was under full sail.

She made little progress, however, as the wind was very light.

"Oh, Lord!" groaned Sam. "We've got to stay on this island, after all. Was there ever such beastly luck?"

If the boys had only known it, they were on the eve of the greatest luck of their young careers.

The boys watched the Jean Barbe until they grew tired, then they stripped and laid their clothes on the sand to dry.

The schooner was perhaps three miles off the island when Dick called Sam's attention to what appeared to be a dark, low-lying cloud on the distant horizon.

"I saw several flashes of light there," he said. "I'll bet there's a storm coming up."

"Let it come," growled Sam. "I don't care what comes up, unless it's a vessel."

"I'd sooner be on this key, as it's called, than on the Jean Barbe, if she should be caught like the Malta was."

"It isn't every craft that's knocked out by a gale," answered Sam. "If most vessels didn't escape storms there'd be mighty few of them sailing the sea."

"That's true enough, but the Frenchman's schooner doesn't look like a vessel that is any too staunch."

"I've got money to bet that she'll reach Nassau all right."

"Probably she will, if luck runs with her."

"Luck always follows a pair of rascals like the skipper and Bill Spurgeon. You see that Spurgeon and his crowd that put off from the brig in the boat were not cast on an uninhabited island like you and me, but evidently reached some port, where he found his chance to ship with the Frenchman."

While the boys were speaking the cloud on the northeast horizon grew bigger and bigger.

It looked black and threatening.

Red flashes of light shot athwart it in an angry way, showing that a heavy gale was brewing in that quarter.

The storm was too far off yet for the sound of thunder to reach the ears of the boys.

"It will be down on this island in the course of an hour or two," said Dick, "and is likely to tear things up generally."

"We'll have to take refuge in the cabin of the wreck," replied Sam.

"Not much," returned Dick. "That hulk wouldn't last half an hour in a good blow. The wind has a clean sweep across the end of the island. It will be more than likely to lift the wreck bodily and carry it off to sea."

"There is only the hut then for us to take shelter in. It doesn't look any too strong to my eye."

"I'll warrant it's twice as safe as the wreck in a gale. Come! Let us examine it."

They looked the hut over, and saw that it was well braced among the four plantain-trees, besides having a good background in the banana grove.

It was exposed in front, however, to the coming storm.

"The rain will come through that just like a sieve," said Sam. "We'll be like a couple of drowned rats in there."

"I saw quite a piece of sailcloth stowed against the cabin bulkhead of the wreck," said Dick. "We'll get that and spread it on top and in front of the hut. It will make a fine protection."

Sam agreed that would be just the thing to do.

Finding that their clothes were dry by this time, they put them on and started for the wreck.

Reaching the derelict in a few minutes, they routed out the sailcloth and carried it to the hut, together with a coil of thin line.

After half an hour's labor they had the hut in shape to resist any kind of a downpour.

"The storm is coming on fast," said Sam, pointing at the northeastern heavens, now covered half way to the zenith with a dense black pall, riven constantly by streaks of electricity.

The Jean Barbe was still in sight to the northwest, and there was little doubt but the tempest would catch her good and hard.

"I think we'd better try and save a few things from the derelict," suggested Dick. "I don't believe there'll be much left of her a few hours hence."

"What shall we save?" asked Sam. "The cooking utensils, plates, and so forth?"

"Yes; and the stove, too, if we can. It will be useful to us."

The boys got a hustle on, and by the time the distant thunder began to grow distinct they had secured not only the stove and stovepipe, but everything else of any possible value that had not been looted by the schooner's crew.

That included the bag of potatoes, a revolver that Dick found hanging in a corner of the cabin, and a case of American canned meat, which they had previously overlooked.

In fact, there was nothing movable that they didn't bring away, so that they finally left the derelict completely denuded.

As they could not tell how long the storm might last, they laid in a store of bananas, together with a big supply of shellfish.

Dick even caught a mess of fish for supper, while Sam put the stovepipe in place and secured a quantity of wood to feed the fire with.

The air had grown quite still, and a dead calm prevailed all around Turtle Key.

This stagnant condition of things, in the face of that awful black pall advancing upon them made the two boys feel very uneasy.

CHAPTER XII.

THE WRECK AND THE GIRL.

The sky grew darker and darker, and yet everything was still around the key.

The lightning blazed fiercer and fiercer, and the thunder waxed louder as the moments passed.

The aspect of nature was terrifying to the two boys.

If the wind and waves had risen gradually they would not have been so impressed.

That would have seemed natural to them; but this mysterious calm in the face of that fierce commotion miles away gave them the creeps.

"What's that?" asked Sam suddenly.

A low moaning sound came to their ears out of the blackness ahead.

This was accompanied by light puffs of wind that died away and then came stronger.

"Look yonder!" cried Dick. "It's coming!"

A long line of white foam was advancing with great swiftness upon Turtle Key.

It was the storm line.

"We'll be swamped!" gasped Sam, turning pale.

Dick made no reply.

Two minutes later the tempest struck the island and swept past it with a roar that tried the nerves of the two boys.

The sea rushed clear up to the hut and swept across the island, flooding the little dwelling with an inch of water, which, however, soaked into the earth at once.

The force of the wind was fearful, and the hut shook and staggered under it, but held firm to its supports.

Outside was one opaque mass, except where the white foam of the waters gleamed through the darkness between the frequent flashes of lightning.

The boys had witnessed many a heavy thunder storm in the States, but nothing that compared with this.

It quite overtopped the gale that had wrecked the Malta, and that was no light one.

For a long time the boys crouched in the one place, never uttering a word.

They were cowed by this fearful demonstration on nature's part.

The rain poured down in bucketfuls, but not a drop penetrated the canvas-covered roof.

At last they grew accustomed to the uproar of the elements.

The fact that nearly an hour had elapsed since the storm burst upon them, and they were still in the land of the living, and seemingly safe in the hut, brought their courage back.

"How would you like to be on the Jean Barbe now?" asked Dick at length.

"Not me," replied Sam. "I'm satisfied to be where I am."

"You'll agree, then, that there are worse places than this island?"

"Bet your life there are—in a gale like this."

"Captain Gerard and Bill Spurgeon are having the time of their lives now, or I'm no prophet. If they and the crew escape they will have reason to be thankful."

"That's right," nodded Sam.

If the boys had been able to look upon a storm-tossed section of the ocean, fifteen miles away to the westward, at that moment, they would have seen the last of the Jean Barbe, as, after an ineffectual fight, she was engulfed by the angry billows and sent to the bottom with all hands.

Thus, unknown to the boys, perished the rascally turtle catcher and his scoundrelly mate, Bill Spurgeon, with all their sins upon their guilty souls.

The storm raged until dawn, and then lulled almost as quickly as it had come up, leaving the ocean around about a seething caldron of foam and spray.

With the rising of the sun, nature resumed a smiling mood, though the wind blew strong and the surf rolled heavily along the beach.

The boys then ventured forth to see what havoc the gale had done on the island.

Dick led the way to the eastern end, curious to learn whether the derelict yet remained on the shore.

They found that every plank of her had disappeared, and not a sign remained on the beach to tell that the hulk had ever rested her keel there.

The boys returned to the hut, and then continued their walk in the opposite direction.

"Hello!" ejaculated Sam suddenly. "Look yonder! There's some kind of vessel ashore on the reef, off the western end of the island."

Dick followed the direction of his chum's finger, and sure enough, wedged in between two black rocks, and surrounded by a cloud of foam and spray, was a small sloop yacht, about thirty-five feet long.

Her mast had gone by the board, and lay beating about in the ycast sea, held by its tracery of rope.

The boom, with its closely reefed canvas, hugged the top of the trunk cabin, and projected across the cockpit.

As far as the boys could make out, when they had approached the wreck as closely as the limits of the surf-swept beach permitted them to do, the hull seemed to have received no great injury.

There was not a sign of life aboard of her, and the boys did not expect to see any.

The wonder was that after such a storm, to which she had undoubtedly been exposed, a single plank of her remained to tell of her fate.

While the boys stood looking at her, speculating as to whom she had belonged to, and whence she had come, an apparition in white slowly arose in the cockpit at a point about where the cabin door was, but which, from the boat's position, they could not see.

"Great Scott! What's that?" cried Dick.

"Why, it looks like a girl!" gurgled the astonished Sam.

"A girl!" ejaculated Dick. "So it is!"

The apparition turned her eyes slowly shoreward and saw the two boys.

"Help! help!" she screamed, holding out her arms in supplication.

The cry was borne to their ears by the wind with startling distinctness, and the piteous appeal galvanized Dick into action.

"We must save her, Sam!" he cried excitedly.

"How can we?" replied Sam. "We can't go off there in this sea!"

"Run to the hut, unship that line with which we tied the canvas to the roof, and bring it back here," said Dick.

Sam, seeing that his companion had some purpose in his mind, hurried away on the run, while Dick began making encouraging signals to the girl on the wreck.

She seemed to understand that an attempt was to be made to save her, and she made no further outcry or demonstration.

Sam was back inside of ten minutes with the long line.

"I'm going to try and swim out and bring her ashore," said Dick, taking one end of the line and tying it around his waist. "The hardest job will be to get out to the wreck. If I succeed, then I will depend on you, Sam, to help us reach the beach by hauling in on the line and preventing the undertow from getting the better of us."

Sam understood, and said he'd do his part.

Before his chum's arrival Dick had divested himself of all his clothing but his trousers, and was ready to make the venture.

As a big wave receded he followed it to the edge of the water line, took a header through the surf, and began swimming out.

He took care to keep as near as possible in line with the reef on which the wreck was perched, so as to avoid the incoming waves, the force of which the reef broke and scattered.

Being an expert and strong swimmer, he gradually drew nearer and nearer the stranded sloop yacht.

At last he was close enough to seize a rope that hung from her bows.

With the help of this he scrambled on board.

The girl gave a cry of joy as she saw him come over the side.

Taking care that the line by which he was connected with the shore did not get entangled with the wreckage alongside, Dick walked aft and jumped down into the cockpit.

This brought him face to face with the fair and only occupant of the wreck.

CHAPTER XIII.

A TREASURE TROVE.

"You have come to save me?" said the girl, looking anxiously into Dick's face.

"I have, miss," he replied. "Anybody else on the boat besides yourself?"

"No. I was the only one aboard when the yacht slipped her anchor and drifted out of Clifton harbor, Watling Island, night before last."

"You were the only one aboard!" ejaculated Dick in surprise.

She nodded.

"Have you been at sea alone since the night before last?"

"Yes."

"Drifting about on the ocean?"

"Yes."

"I don't see how you kept afloat last night in that storm."

"This boat couldn't sink even if she capsized."

"Why not?"

"Because she is fitted with four airtight tanks under the cabin."

"About what time did the boat go on this reef?"

"Just before daylight."

"It seems a miracle to me that she didn't go to pieces at once. She must have slid on to her perch here in an odd way. She seems to have glided into a kind of rocky cradle that holds her on an almost even keel. I don't think another vessel would strike the same spot in the random way she must have done once in a thousand years. It was blind luck, and that's what saved your life," said Dick, who by this time had noticed that the girl was quite pretty, though she looked all broke up over her strenuous experience of the last thirty-six hours. "What is your name, miss?"

"Florence Strong."

"And mine is Dick Appleton. Now, if you will trust yourself to me, I will carry you ashore."

She was willing to do anything he said, so he helped her on top of the trunk cabin, bound the end of the rope around them both, for greater security, and then led her to a point near the bow.

After signaling to Sam he lowered himself into the water, holding the girl closely with one arm, and with the other struck out for the beach, Sam drawing in slowly on the line, and thus preventing the undertow from sweeping them away.

In a few minutes they landed safely on the shore, and then Dick introduced the dripping young lady to his friend.

"Come! We will hurry to our hut, which is close by. There you can remove your wet clothes and roll yourself up in a blanket until your garments have dried in the sun. That won't take more than half an hour, if you wring the water out well, and my chum and I will put in the time on the opposite side of the island," said Dick.

During the short walk the girl told her rescuer and his friend that her father was the owner of the sloop yacht, the name of which was the Niobe.

They hailed from Philadelphia, and had been cruising in

the West Indies for six weeks, during which time they had visited the chief towns in Cuba, Hayti, Porto Rico, and other islands.

They had put in at Clifton harbor, Watling Island, for supplies, on their way home, and it was while her father and the small crew of two young men were ashore in the small boat that the yacht had in some unexplainable way slipped her moorings and drifted out to sea, carrying the girl away with her.

The boys left Miss Strong in full possession of the hut, after showing her where she could hang up her clothing to the best advantage in the sun, and walked around the banana grove to the beach on the south side of the island.

"She's a pretty girl, all right, in spite of her wilted look," remarked Sam as he and Dick strolled down to the spot where the bleached ribs of the old wreck stuck out of the sandy beach.

"Yes, and a very interesting one, too," replied Dick.

As Dick spoke his eye was caught by the glitter of a small, bright object shining in the sun.

It lay in a deep trench furrowed out by the storm of the night before in the midst of the bleached ribs of the ancient wreck.

He jumped down into the long excavation, and picked up the shiny object, which proved to be an old Spanish gold coin.

"See what I found here!" he said, holding the coin up before Sam's eyes.

"What is it? A piece of money?" asked Sam.

"That's what it is," said Dick, tossing it to him.

"You found it on the sand?" said Sam.

"Right here," replied Dick, giving the sand a kick with the toe of his shoe.

To his amazement, three other gold pieces turned up.

He pounced upon them, and found that they were similar in all respects to the one Sam held in his hand.

"Gee whiz! Here is more money running around loose!" he exclaimed.

The moment Sam spied the three additional pieces he sprang down into the trench and began pawing the sand.

He turned up six gold coins almost in as many seconds.

"The sand is full of money!" he cried excitedly.

Dick, just as excited as his chum, got busy, too, and almost every handful of sand they tossed up contained one or two gold pieces.

"Say! if this doesn't beat the deck!" gurgled Sam. "Where do you suppose all this money came from?"

"I couldn't tell you where it came from," replied Dick; "how could I? One thing, however, seems clear to me. It must have been aboard this old vessel when she went ashore here years ago."

"This is slow work," said Sam, after they had accumulated a pile of fifty or more gold pieces. "There must be a lot of money around this spot. What we need badly is a shovel to throw the sand out of the trench. It falls back into the hole we are making as fast as we throw it out."

"As we haven't a shovel on the island, a piece of board will have to answer. We will get a couple of light boards when we return to the hut."

Dick agreed with him, so they stopped to rest and to handle and examine the eighty-odd coins they had so far secured.

"These must be worth \$10 each," said Sam. "They are about the size of one of our own eagles."

"They are old coins, all right, though in good condition because they've been out of circulation a great many years. If they're worth \$10 each, then this batch foots up about \$800."

"I wouldn't be surprised if there are thousands of dollars' worth of them still in the sand here," said Sam.

"We'll make it our business to dig the spot over until they cease to come to light. It might be our luck to have lighted on a real pirate's treasure."

"In that case we're sure to become wealthy."

"I guess we can stand a little prosperity after the knocking about we've lately been up against."

"Bet your life we can. I wouldn't object to finding a million in money."

"We won't find a million, or a quarter of that. Don't you worry."

"Well, there is no use arguing the matter. I guess we've spent an hour here now, so we may venture to return to the hut and get the boards to continue our search with."

That suited the impatient Sam, who was on his feet in a jiffy, and back the boys went to the hut, where they had left the rescued girl.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE TREASURE OF TURTLE KEY.

They found Florence Strong seated in front of the hut, trying to untangle the tresses of her long golden hair with her fingers.

Her clothes had dried, and she had put them on again.

"Well, how do you feel, Miss Strong?" asked Dick with a smile.

"Pretty good, considering the experience I went through," she answered with an arch look. "You must think me an awfully ungrateful girl, for I haven't thanked you for saving my life."

"Don't worry about that. Sam and I are glad to have rendered you a service."

"But you risked your life swimming out to the wreck of the yacht. I can never thank you enough for that. I hope you will understand that I am very grateful to you, Mr. Appleton."

"All right. I believe you. I suppose your father will get another vessel and go hunting around among these islands after the Niobe, in expectation of finding her ashore somewhere?" said Dick.

"My father will not leave these waters till he finds some trace of me," she answered.

While Dick was talking to the girl Sam was hunting around for a couple of suitable boards to use in digging after more money.

Finally he found about what he thought would answer their purpose, and brought them forward.

"Want to go treasure hunting with us, Miss Strong?" asked Dick.

"Treasure hunting!" Florence exclaimed, opening her pretty eyes in surprise.

"Yes. See the money we've found already." And he showed the bunch of coins in his jacket.

"Gracious!" she cried. "Where did you find all that money?"

"On the south shore of this island, back of this hut. Fetch one of those empty pots, Sam, so I can put these coins in it."

Sam got a pot in a minute, and Dick dumped the money into it.

"Come along," he said. "You can lend a hand, Miss Strong."

"What can I do?"

"Pick up the money as we turn it up out of the sand. Fetch another pot with you, Sam. It will be handier than my coat to put the money in."

"How did the money come to be on the shore?" Florence asked, clearly astonished at such a circumstance.

"We found it in the midst of the wreck of an old vessel which must have come ashore on the island sixty or more years ago," replied Dick.

"Dear me! How funny!" she said. "Are those bananas?" she asked suddenly, pointing toward the grove.

"That's what they are. That reminds me that Sam and I haven't had our breakfast yet, and I suppose you're half starved, too?"

"Yes, I am quite hungry, though I had plenty to eat aboard the yacht."

"You wouldn't mind eating something, would you, Sam?" asked Dick.

"That money knocked all thoughts of breakfast out of my head. I guess we'd better eat before resuming work."

"I think so, too. Start a fire in the stove. There are fish and mussels enough left to make a meal for all of us."

Sam built a fire and Dick acted as chief cook.

In half an hour they sat down on the sand to their rude meal, and Florence declared that the fish tasted fine, all things considered.

They topped their repast off with bananas, and after washing the pans and dishes the trio started for the old wreck.

Although one good shovel would have done the business better than half a dozen boards, still the boys found their rude implements a great improvement over their hands, and they were soon making the loose sand fly.

At first, no golden pieces appeared to gladden the hearts of the boys.

They had to get rid of the sand they had already sifted of its precious freight.

The first piece of money appeared through the air as Dick tossed a boardful of sand a yard or two away.

Florence saw it shining in the sunlight and ran after it.

After that the boy diggers grew more careful, and soon the coins began to jingle in the pot that had been provided for their reception.

Perhaps fifty pieces had been turned into the pot when Dick's board struck an obstruction.

Getting down on his knees, and pulling the sand carefully away, the broken remains of a stout box were revealed.

Further investigation disclosed the fact that it was full of golden coin, plentifully mixed with sand.

"Hurrah!" shouted Sam. "Here's the treasure chest at last."

There seemed to be no doubt about that, and the boys had the pot filled to the brim with money in a twinkling.

"Carry it around to the hut, Sam, and dump it on the floor, if you can't find a better place for it," said Dick, wiping his face with his shirt sleeve.

Sam hastened away, and while he was gone Dick told the girl about the adventures he and his chum had had since they ran away from Oriole Academy.

He was about half through his narrative when Sam returned with the empty pot, and he paused long enough to refill the culinary article and despatch his friend with it back to the hut.

By the time Sam got back again, Dick was telling Florence how they had been cast ashore on Turtle Key.

"You can continue the story, Sam, while I act as pack horse," said Dick.

The pot was filled with coin, and Dick bore it to the hut in a leisurely way, for he believed they had time enough and to spare to transport several chests of gold, were they so fortunate as to find them.

While he was absent Sam described the arrival of the turtle catcher and his schooner, the Jean Barbe, at the key, and their exciting experience at hunting turtles along the north shore of the island.

It took an hour to carry the last of the contents of the chest to the hut, and then the boys began digging for more chests.

It was warm work, and they had to stop frequently to rest and seek the shelter of the banana grove.

By the time the sun was directly overhead they had found perhaps thirty more scattered coins, but had found no more chests.

There was quite a pyramid of gold coins in the hut to gladden their eyes.

Dick estimated that if the coins were worth \$10 each there must be all of \$100,000 in the pile.

After dinner, which consisted of canned meat and bananas, they rested in the shade of the grove, and talked, until, between the heat and the loss of rest the night before, the three fell into a sound sleep.

It was close on to sundown when they awoke.

The sea had gone down so much that there was scarcely any surf along the north shore.

Dick proposed that they should go to the western end of the island and see how the stranded Niobe fared.

They soon came in sight of the yacht, and found her now high, and almost dry, on the top of the reef.

Having learned from Florence that there were many things, including a small supply of provisions, on the Niobe that were bound to prove useful to them on the island, Dick began to figure on visiting the wreck and bringing some of the articles ashore.

The water being comparatively smooth now between the reef and the shore, Dick saw that it would be an easy matter to swim out to the yacht.

"Sam, take Miss Strong to the hut and bring the long line back with you," he said.

In fifteen minutes Sam returned with the line which had figured to such good purpose in the rescue of the girl.

Dick got out of all his clothes, tied the line about his middle, and swam out to the reef.

Securing the end of the rope to the short bowsprit of the yacht, he ran aft and entered the cabin.

He found it quite roomy, and handsomely fitted up for the comfort of Mr. Strong and his daughter.

Subsequently Dick looked into the small forecastle in the bow, and found it fitted with two bunks for the hands, a cookstove, and all the necessary culinary articles for preparing a good meal.

After a thorough investigation of the cabin, Dick took a square of oilskin and wrapped up a canister of coffee, another of tea, some sugar, half a dozen cans of condensed milk, several packages of crackers, some potted tongue, and sundry other articles.

Tying the neck of the bundle tightly, as one would a pudding about to be put into a pot for boiling, Dick refastened the long line around his waist and started back for the shore.

The trip was easy, even with the big bundle to manage, as Sam helped him by pulling in on the rope.

"That will do for this time, for it will soon be dark," said Dick, dropping his burden and resuming his clothes.

"What did you bring off?" asked Sam curiously.

"You'll see when we get back to the hut," was the reply.

That evening, as darkness fell quickly over the island and the seascape, the rich aroma of good coffee permeated the atmosphere of the hut probably for the first time in its existence, and the three young people partook of a tolerably decent meal, which included a mess of fresh fish caught by Sam.

CHAPTER XV.

CONCLUSION.

After supper the young people sat in front of the hut and talked.

"Although Sam and I have never felt exactly lonesome here, still your coming, Miss Florence, seems to have made a whole lot of difference. You have increased the population by one-half as much again, and that fact makes the island more cheerful."

"I'm glad to find myself of some use at last," laughed Florence. "Oh!" she cried suddenly. "Isn't that lovely?"

She pointed across the undulating surface of the ocean to the spot where the moon was just peeping above the distant watery horizon, casting a silvery pathway across the mighty deep.

The boys admitted that it was a splendid sight.

They watched the moon as it soared above the water line and hung suspended in the deep azure like a glistening ball of silver.

Whether the moon had a somnolent effect on them or not, certain it is they began to feel sleepy soon after it arose.

The boys turned the hut over to the girl for her to sleep in, while they took up their quarters in the shadow of the banana grove.

Next morning, soon after sunrise, Dick and Sam were on the western shore, looking off toward the wreck.

"I want to go aboard of her this time," said Sam.

"All right," replied Dick. "Nobody is going to stop you."

So Sam stripped, put the line about his waist, and plunged into the sea.

After looking the yacht all over he returned with a small bundle of canned meat.

Then Dick took his turn and brought off a number of things.

The boys made two trips each, and then returned to the hut with the results of their early morning exercise, to find Florence already up and a pot of coffee made.

They had fried potatoes and potted tongue for breakfast, with the inevitable banana as a wind up to the repast.

Then all three visited the ancient wreck and continued their search for another money chest, but without result.

"I guess we've secured whatever treasure there was aboard this craft," said Dick.

"If we have, then she wasn't a pirate craft," said Sam.

"Why not?" asked Dick.

"Because if she were a pirate, we ought to find a chest full of costly pieces of jewelry, such as rings, watches, etc."

"This might have been a Spanish government ship, carrying the pay to the army in Cuba," said Dick. "That would account for the presence of a chest of gold aboard of her."

"That's so," nodded Sam. "If we had a couple of shovels we could search the wreck much better. We can't do anything more with these boards."

"I'm satisfied with what we have done. What we want

to do now is to pack that coin up for shipment so that we can take it with us when the time comes for us to leave the island," said Dick.

"Correct," replied Sam. "How will we do it? Make little bags out of pieces of canvas?"

"No," answered Dick. "That wouldn't do. Anybody would be able to tell that we had a lot of money in our possession, and would expect us to divide up, or even take it away by force. It would be a great temptation for some of these West Indians to do us up for the money."

"Then how are we to manage about it?" asked Sam a bit anxiously.

"I noticed a small tool-chest aboard the yacht. We must get it ashore, or at least a hammer, saw and nails. Then we'll be able to make half a dozen small boxes out of the superfluous wood we have around. After nailing the coin up in them, I'll defy anybody to say what is inside of them."

Dick's suggestion was carried out, and within forty-eight hours the Spanish gold coin was all securely boxed, ready for shipment.

The treasure being now satisfactorily disposed of for the present, all the party had to do was to eat, sleep, and watch hopefully for an early rescue.

A week went by, and they looked every day to see Florence's father appear on the lookout after the Niobe and his only daughter.

During this time Dick and the girl became especially friendly.

Sam observed their growing liking for each other without making any remark on the subject to his chum.

He got into the habit of going alone and leaving them together.

The weather held uncommonly fine since the last storm, the surface of the ocean often lying as calm as a mill-pond.

The Niobe remained perched on the rocks in the same position in which she had come ashore.

By degrees the boys removed about everything of value from her.

A second and a third week had passed away since Miss Strong had been added to the population of Turtle Key, and still there was no sign of a vessel of any kind making for the island.

"Your father must be almost convinced by this time that you and the Niobe went down together the night of the storm," said Dick to Florence, as they stood looking out to sea one night.

"Poor papa!" said the girl tearfully. "If he only knew where to look for me he would soon be happy."

"There are so many of these small keys, I've heard, that it is like hunting for a needle in a haystack to look them all over," replied Dick. "However, we're bound to get taken off some time, so cheer up, Florence."

He put his arm around her waist, and she did not resist the familiarity.

"Do you feel sure that no matter what happens Sam and I will stand by you, and see that you get back to your father as soon as possible?"

"Yes," she said.

"Do you like me, Florence?" he said, drawing her closer to him.

"Yes," she answered.

"Will you always like me very much, even after we leave here?"

"Yes."

He raised her head, and their eyes met.

The temptation was too much for Dick to see a pair of red lips so close to his own, so he bent down and kissed her.

She hid her face on his shoulder, and after that they were happy together.

Three days more elapsed, and then a sail appeared on the eastern horizon.

Dick, Sam and Florence were eating their dinner at the time and did not see it, for it was approaching the south side of the key.

The dishes were washed, and they were sitting in the shade of the banana grove, when the sail, now plainly a good-sized schooner, came coasting in within half a mile of the shore behind them.

Those on board were sweeping the island with their glasses, and presently they made out the wreck of the Niobe on the reef.

The vessel was headed right in at once toward the reef.

A fine-looking, gray-haired gentleman, standing well forward, with a telescope in his hands, gave a cry of despair, for he had recognized his lost yacht.

A boat was lowered, and put off with the gentleman in it. He boarded the yacht and looked into the cabin.

The decaying corpse of his daughter was not there.

A singular circumstance struck him at once—the fact that everything movable on the vessel, even to the compass in the binnacle, had been removed from it.

What did that mean?

That the wreck had been plundered by somebody, and his child's corpse probably cast into the sea!

The island showed no traces of being inhabited, but nevertheless he decided to land and go over it, as a last forlorn hope.

The boat was reached, and Mr. Strong, accompanied by the captain of the schooner, landed and started around by the north shore.

They had advanced but a short distance before Dick, happening to cast his eyes around the banana grove, saw them.

With an exclamation he jumped to his feet.

"What's the matter?" asked Sam.

"There are two men coming this way!" he replied excitedly.

Sam and Florence jumped to their feet and looked.

The girl's eyes immediately recognized one of the newcomers as her father.

With a cry of joy she ran toward him.

Mr. Strong soon saw her, and he rushed forward to meet her with a heart overflowing with happiness.

In a few moments they were in each other's arms.

Explanations followed, and the girl introduced the boys to her father.

Mr. Strong thanked them for the care they had extended to his child, and particularly thanked Dick for risking his life in Florence's behalf.

There was no reason for remaining longer on the key now, so the whole party embarked in the boat, the boys not forgetting to take their boxes of treasure with them.

Everything else was left in the hut for the benefit of whoever happened to land there subsequently.

The schooner immediately sailed for Nassau, and reached that town on the following afternoon, where they went to a hotel with the money boxes, the contents of which had been confidentially explained to Mr. Strong, who promised to attend to their shipment to the United States by the same steamer on which they would go themselves.

In due time the party reached New York.

Mr. Strong got the money boxes through the custom house, and sold the coin to the government for its intrinsic value.

He received a check for \$110,000, which was divided as follows: \$50,000 each to Dick and Sam, and \$10,000 to Florence.

As Dick was fearful that his stepfather, as his guardian, would take charge of his money by a court order, he handed his share over to Mr. Strong to invest for him.

This precaution proved unnecessary, for Dick presently learned that his mother's husband had died during his absence, leaving his estate equally divided between his stepson and an only sister.

Dick then asked Mr. Strong to act as his guardian until he reached his majority, and the gentleman gladly undertook the responsibility.

Dick and Sam then went to an academy that proved more congenial to their tastes than Dr. Titus' school, and when they graduated therefrom they went into a business partnership together.

A year after, Dick and Florence were married, with Sam as the best man.

All this happened many years ago, and to-day Dick and Sam are in their forties.

They live in handsome homes, near together, in Mount Vernon, and never a week passes but they dine at one another's houses.

Each has his private den in a certain part of his house, and here they like to smoke their after-dinner cigar together and talk business.

Sometimes their minds go back to the days of their boyhood, and then they find a peculiar pleasure in living over again the time when they were lost in the tropics.

Next week's issue will contain "TEN SILENT BROKERS; OR, THE BOY WHO BROKE THE WALL STREET SYNDICATE."

Send Postal for Our Free Catalogue.

HELP YOUR COUNTRY!

A WAR FOOD MESSAGE.

In co-operation with the National Wholesale Grocers' Association, a leaflet bearing a war food message for the American home is being distributed by the Food Administration. This leaflet covers in an interesting style the opportunities of the housewife for conserving food supplies needed by our Army, Navy and allies. Grocers are asked to order quantities of this leaflet through the National Wholesale Grocers' Association for distribution to their customers. They are also asked to hand it to their local newspaper editors for publication.

CANNING PERISHABLE FOOD.

The Woman's Central Committee of Food Conservation in St. Louis has established a cannery near the produce station. Each night after the commission market closes they take the surplus of perishable fruits and vegetables from produce houses and can them, under the direction of experts from the Missouri State University. This cannery is run on a co-operation basis, and the investment needed has been reduced to the minimum by paying women workers partly in canned goods and partly in raw material. The cannery also puts up surplus fruits and vegetables brought in by people who have home gardens in the suburbs.

THE USE OF COTTONSEED FLOUR.

A cottonseed-oil mill in Texas is marketing cottonseed flour, which has been found suitable not only for mixing with wheat flour to make bread, but also for waffles, pancakes, sweet cakes and corn bread. It is said to make a very palatable bread and to be the most nourishing bread-making material known. It is used in proportions of 20 per cent. cottonseed flour with 80 per cent. wheat flour, and the mill is making 24 tons of it daily. Bread made with cottonseed flour resembles rye and has found favor in communities where people of European nationalities live. With velvet-bean meal, cottonseed meal, peanut meal, and soy-bean meal the South now produces more protein feed than any other section of this country.

PORK FROM GARBAGE.

The garbage from an Omaha chain of restaurants is being fed to 400 hogs, of which 100 are ready for slaughter every three months. Pork is made so profitable that the Omaha Hotel Men's Association is forming a hog-raising organization. Omaha's city garbage is sold for \$5,000 a year for hog feeding. Hull, Mass., has a herd of 325 hogs, which turn garbage into pork. One man manages the entire herd, which started with young pigs bought by the town's committee of public safety for the citizens. Land for pasturing and housing is loaned

free and the only expense for the plant was the cost of erecting two large herd houses and the wages of the attendant.

The sale of perishable fruits and vegetables through the summer and fall season is being stimulated by the produce dealers and the Office of Markets, Department of Agriculture, through a new plan. Every morning a general canvass is made of the market to determine how much of each kind of fruit and vegetable is for sale, and where there is an extra large supply for the day the newspapers are notified and publish notices to the public that such articles are just then plentiful and reasonable in price. Notice is also given of articles which are scarce, and, therefore, likely to be rather high in price. This plan guides the consumer in supplying the table economically, and helps adjust surpluses and shortages.

THE COSTLY BAG SYSTEM.

The bag system of shipping grain on the Pacific Coast causes so much freight congestion and is so expensive in other ways that efforts are being made to install grain elevators as a measure of food conservation. Bags for a 10,000-bushel wheat crop cost the farmer \$500, an expense of over \$1,000,000 to the State of Washington alone. They add to the freight weight, cause loss through holes, require a large force of handlers, and lead to unfair deductions for the weight and value of the bags. Sacked grain requires twice as much storage space as bulk grain, and when the crop is moving there is a shortage of cars and warehouse space. Modern elevators eliminate all this waste and trouble.

TO STIMULATE FISH BUSINESS.

Kenneth Fowler, well known in the Fulton Market fish trade of New York, is in charge of the fish section of perishable foods under the Food Administration, serving as a volunteer. His work will be to increase the production, distribution and consumption of salt and fresh water fish as a means of conserving meats. It has been found that the fish trade is not well organized. The public knows only a few varieties of salt and fresh water fish, neglecting other varieties of equal food value which might be purchased at lower prices. Fish is consumed chiefly on one day in the week—Friday—and neglected other days. This makes it difficult for merchants to sell fish, so there are not enough retail outlets. Corresponding fluctuations in price demoralize the wholesale markets. Mr. Fowler's work will be constructive, beginning with suggestions for better organization in the trade and followed by popular education, through publicity, to increase demand.

OUT FOR EVERYTHING

OR

THE BOY WHO TOOK CHANCES

By GASTON GARNE

(A SERIAL STORY.)

CHAPTER XXVII (Continued).

He fled the country, in fact, and that was the last of his miserable blackmailing sheet, Society Doings. Allert was allowed to go, and he, too, left the country.

Within ten days word came from Texas that Edward Kirk's full pardon had been signed by the governor of that State.

But that did not clear Ned, Chug or Gorriigan, the latter of whom was now at the Fulham place, acting as coachman.

Mr. Fulham, however, "stirred heaven and earth" in behalf of those who had aided his brother-in-law.

The best lawyers were engaged. The utmost pressure was brought to bear on the district attorney of the county.

It resulted, at last, in the district attorney going before the Grand Jury.

To that body the prosecuting officer presented the facts in the case, but added that, in his opinion, since Kirk's friends had acted successfully to save an innocent man, no good purpose could be served by punishing these friends for a good act.

After giving the matter very little thought, the Grand Jury returned a finding of "no bill."

Ned, Chug and Gorriigan were thereupon released in triumph.

As for the charge made by Slippery Dan's pals, that Ned had really planned the robbery at Craddock's, that was so "thin" that no heed was paid to it by the Grand Jury.

On the day of that finding, there was a jubilee at the Fulham house.

People had begun to "take notice" of Ned Warren once more.

Now he was no longer treated as an outcast.

Instead, he became a lion in that little town.

He was restored to membership in the country club.

That same Grand Jury returned indictments that sent Slippery Dan and his two pals to prison for years to come.

But for Ned Warren, things were right easy from now on.

With the little capital that he had put by he went into business ventures, making more and more money as time passed.

As for Chug, that automobile-crazy youngster had the good luck to stumble upon a simple little device in connection with speed gears.

He patented it, and now Chug draws from his invention all the money that he needs.

Chug needs money enough for two, now, by the way. In the course of his wanderings he ran across "the only girl."

Ned Warren, too, needs money enough for two, for he and Grace were wedded last June.

Both he and Chug have their homes near the Fulhams.

Ned, having money enough to need a coachman in these days, has Gorriigan sitting over the reins.

Nor had any man ever a more faithful or honest servitor, for Gorriigan, having gotten free of the charge to which he owed his acquaintance with our hero, has never again tempted fate by dishonest deeds.

"Sometimes, Ned," sighed Grace, the other day, "I feel that we're so happy that it's too good to last."

"I'll take a chance," smiled Ned Warren. "I always got my best luck by taking big chances, anyway!"

THE END.

OUT NEXT WEEK!

ANOTHER GRAND SERIAL STORY

ENTITLED

TWO FOR A CENT

OR

THE CHEAPEST BOY ON EARTH

BY GASTON GARNE

Don't fail to read the

OPENING CHAPTERS NEXT WEEK

FACTS WORTH READING

FRANCE LOOKING FORWARD.

France is already thinking of American tourists after the war and taking measures for their reception and entertainment. The Monthly Review of the Touring Club of France prints a number of suggestions received from members of the American Commercial and Industrial Mission to France a few months ago, among which are the following: Sending to the United States a hotel commission for the purpose of studying plans, prices, methods of management and operation, etc., applicable to the French hotel business. Application of the best American methods for heating, ventilation, electric installation, elevators, bathrooms, kitchens, laundries, bars, baggage rooms, and automatic machinery of various kinds. Organization of a purchasing service by which each hotel could buy, at wholesale rates, material, furniture, and provisions. Simultaneous construction of a number of new hotels in France.

Sending young Frenchmen abroad every year to study the hotel business.

Centralization in a single office, with branch establishments in the principal cities of the world, of all publicity work, for the purpose of systematically spreading information regarding hotels and traveling in France.

GLASS FOR COOKING UTENSILS.

From time immemorial, cooking utensils have been made of pottery, because this was the only substance known that would withstand the heat of the baking oven and the rather rough handling of the kitchen, and that was in addition, cheap. Almost the same ingredients are used in making pottery as are used in making glass. In pottery, these ingredients are molded into forms and are simply baked at a temperature just high enough to melt a glaze on the outside surface; but, in glass, they are melted into a liquid at a high temperature and then molded by pouring or blowing into various shapes.

The common glass that we have always known is brittle, easily breakable, and never before has there been a glass produced that could be heated and suddenly cooled without breaking. But a new glass now being made at Corning, N. Y., is used for baking dishes and cooking utensils and can be handled quite as roughly as any crockery. Every housekeeper now can see what her puddings and pies look like on the inside. This glass is a chemical product, in that it has been produced solely by the ingenuity of the chemist in the compounding of the ingredients, and not by any method of tempering.

BASEBALL GAINS HOLD ON BRITISH POP-ULACE.

Baseball has gripped England, particularly in and around the London district, with such vim and depth that it has easily outrivaled all other outdoor sports at the present time. While it has been played for several years by many of the London soccer football clubs, not as an attraction, but simply to keep the players in training during the summer months, it appears certain, from the patronage given to the game during the last few weeks, that it has at last come to stay.

The Canadian soldiers laid the foundation two years ago, but, with the arrival of the American boys, so much pep has been thrown into the game that the growing enthusiasm has carried the Britishers away from their own summer sports. Last Saturday week 10,000 people crowded into Lord's, the headquarters of the Marylebone Cricket Club, to see a game between picked teams of Canadians and Americans, which resulted in a win for the former by 12 to 3.

FACTORY GIRL GETS \$150,000.

Miss Mamie Kelly, thirty-three years old, of Elizabeth, N. J., once a poor factory girl earning \$2.50 a week, is now in possession of an estate estimated at from \$100,000 to \$150,000.

William Heal, sixty-nine, a wealthy and eccentric bachelor, for whom Miss Kelly worked as house-keeper and private secretary, left practically his entire estate to her. He died a few days ago. His will was admitted to probate in Elizabeth recently.

Besides Miss Kelly only two other beneficiaries are mentioned in the will. They are Agnes Heal, a sister, of Jacksonville, Fla., and Fannie Kerr, a niece, of Toledo, Ohio. Each of these relatives is bequeathed \$2,000 by the will. The bequests are left optional with Miss Kelly to be paid or revoked as she sees fit.

Heal conducted a woodenware factory, employing more than a hundred operatives. Miss Kelly is now in possession of the factory. She is running it, she says, as Mr. Heal would have her run it.

Heal was known in Elizabeth as an eccentric character. He had his residence built into his factory building. The apartments were luxurious. There was an elaborate gymnasium. Mr. Heal's favorite pastime was boxing. He brought in professional fighters to teach him the science of the manly art.

Just twenty years ago Mr. Heal employed Miss Kelly. She is said to have come from New York. She went to work at the lowest salary he paid and labored faithfully, working her way up to the position of private secretary.

CURRENT NEWS

Reuben Smuck of Red Lion, Pa., was stung by bees so severely that he lost consciousness. When he discovered a swarm in a cherry tree he climbed up and sawed off the limb and brought it to the ground. He tried to shake the bees into the hive and they attacked him, and his body was soon covered by the insects. He finally became unconscious and was rescued by his wife.

Shirt makers of New York and its vicinity will begin work soon on one of the largest orders ever given in the history of the country. The order, which calls for 500,000 dozen shirts for the men of the army and navy, means the employment of 10,000 persons. It is said that the shirt makers will be paid from \$5 to \$6 a week more on this contract than is usual for military work.

Railroads of the country used more coal in 1916 than in 1915, the total having been 142,735,000 tons, or 24 per cent. of the entire output. Figures given out by the Geological Survey show that of the total coal consumed 136,000,000 tons were bituminous and 6,735,000 anthracite, representing increases respectively of 11.5 per cent. and 8.5 per cent. over 1915. In addition, the roads used 22,950 tons of coke.

The Marine Corps rifle range at Winthrop, Md., is being worked to its fullest capacity. Hundreds of Marine Corps officers and men are taking weekly the full course of instruction in rifle shooting as applied to modern warfare. More than 73 per cent. of the members of the Marine Corps who fired the prescribed course during 1916 are qualified expert riflemen, sharpshooters, or marksmen.

At the request of the U. S. Government five French artillery officers have been sent to this country to act as instructors in the serving of heavy modern ordnance, with particular reference to both forms of "barrage" fire, at the School of Fire, Fort Sill, Okla. The officers are Major Reille and Captains Durette, Trives, Pierret and Monroe. No limit has been placed on the time they will remain at the School of Fire.

Two robbers in a taxicab from New York the other day held up Bird S. Bennett, paymaster for a comb manufacturing concern of East Rutherford, N. J., beat their victim senseless, threw him into the vehicle and drove rapidly away. After they had robbed Bennett of \$2,100, which he had drawn from a bank for his firm's pay-roll, the bandits threw him out of the taxicab and disappeared. Bennett was found a short time later in a dazed condition, but not seriously injured.

Joseph Larsen, who was referred to as a "human goat" by the police because of his appetite for buttons, needles, pins and glass, is dead of epilepsy and a complication of diseases at the county infirmary. When in a cell recently at the police station in Evansville, Ind., Larsen swallowed several needles and buttons in the belief that this would gain his release. He seemingly suffered no ill effects from the experience. Prior to this, one day, Larsen smashed a pop bottle and swallowed some pieces.

A plan to safeguard American ships from submarine attack has been worked out by the Naval Consulting Board and a special committee appointed by Major-General George W. Goethals, U. S. A., and W. L. Sanders, charman of the board, has advised war relief societies to adopt as a safeguard for their ships this system, the details of which were not made public. Mr. Sanders was quoted on August 3 as saying that the plans have been approved by the Federal authorities who are now putting into effect through the war risk insurance bureau a lower insurance premium on ships equipped according to its provisions.

In describing the work of the airmen at the front, Major L. W. B. Rees, of the British flying corps, stated recently that the British fly on three levels with three kinds of machines. The lowest are the artillery directors, who circle about in big figure eights some 6,000 feet above the enemy trenches and flash back directions to the British gunners by wireless. Above them at 10,000 feet, are the heavy fighters with two men to a machine and able to keep the air for four hours at a speed of 110 miles per hour. At a height of 15,000 feet are the single-man, light fighters, capable of 130 miles an hour and of ascending the first 10,000 feet in ten minutes.

The force of an avalanche wind is illustrated in a case recently reported by Mr. M. B. Summers, in charge of the Weather Bureau station at Juneau, Alaska. The wind occurred as the result of a heavy snowslide into Gold Creek Gulch, near Juneau. This gulch is at the foot of the precipitous south slope of Mount Juneau. On the opposite side of the gulch, at a distance of 15 feet from the bank where the slide occurred, stood three cabins. The force of the blast generated by the down-rushing snow was sufficient to demolish these cabins completely and to carry the debris 100 feet up the slope. The wind also rush laterally along the gulch, destroying another cabin 500 feet distant. In the town of Juneau, a quarter of a mile distant, the force of the wind was felt strongly, and the town was enveloped in a blinding whirl of snow for several minutes.

THE CAVE OF GOLD

—OR—

THE BOY MINERS OF THE ROCKIES

By ED KING

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER V (Continued).

"Ye're no good, Bill. Ye hain't no ackribat!" "Better go back an' sit down in ther corner."

"My foot slipped," mumbled Bill. "I'd a-done et then ef m' foot hadn't slipped. Do et nex' timezh, all ri'."

Then he recovered his balance—he had nearly fallen—and began swinging his arms again.

Suddenly he paused, turned and looked behind him, as though deciding where he would alight; then he shifted his feet a few inches and began swinging his arms again like a couple of huge, erratic pendulums.

He was standing right in front of the door now, and only about two feet from it, and just as he seemed to be on the point of making the attempt to leap into the air, the door came open suddenly, and striking the woold-be acrobat in the face, sent him backward to the floor with a crash and a howl of rage and pain.

"Hello!" exclaimed the newcomer, a dark-faced man, dressed in the garb of civilization—store-clothes, the miners call them. "What have I done now?"

"Ye've upset ther greatest ackribat uv ther age!" snickered a miner.

"Yaas, ye've shore stopped him frum flip-floppin' onter ther back uv his punkinhead."

"Like enuff ye've saved 'im frum breakin' his neck."

"I wan' revenge!" howled the fallen man, rolling over onto his stomach and trying to scramble to his feet. "Show me ther man whatzh done that an' I'll spill him all overzh ther floor!"

The stranger looked at the fallen man and laughed easily.

"Sorry I upset the gent and spoiled your fun," he said.

"Waal, ye jest beat him to et, that's all," grinned a miner; "fur ef ye hedn't upset 'im, he'd a-done et himse'f right erway."

"'S a lie!" howled the miner, scrambling to his feet; "I'd a-been turnin' flip-flopzh all over ze floor ef that feller hedn't knocked me down. Whar is he? Whar's ther blame scoun'rel, ennyhow? I'll eat 'im without enny salt! I'll—"

He had got onto his feet by this time, and had turned and just then he caught a glimpse of the stranger's face. Instantly his underjaw dropped, and his hand fell from the butt of his revolver, where he had placed it.

"Oh, et's—et's ye, is et?" he remarked, somewhat lamely, and then he turned and made his way back to the corner and sat down.

The spectators stared in amazement. They knew Bill Saunders was a rather tough character and that he would shoot on very little provocation. They had expected that he would do so now, but instead he had walked away without a word. It was evident that he knew the stranger, and it was also evident that he feared him.

"He seems ter know ye, stranger," said Red Rollin, eyeing the stranger with considerable interest.

"Yes, we have met before," was the careless reply. "Down in New Mexico, I believe it was. He got gay, and I had to discipline him a bit. You notice that he doesn't seem to want any trouble with me." And the man laughed coldly.

"Yaas, we notussed et," said Pretty Pete, dryly.

"Hey, Bill, hain't ye goin' ter turn them flip-flops?" called out a miner, banteringly.

"Don' give et up that way, Bill," from another.

"I allers thort that when ye said ye'd do er thing, ye'd do et," jeered a third.

"Go hang, all ye fellers!" snarled Bill. "I'm done, I am! Here, bartender, bring me some whisky, an' do et moughty quick!"

"Sorry I spoiled the fun," said the stranger. "I guess that in order to square myself with the crowd, I'll have to stand treat. Line up, everybody, and say what you'll have."

"Whisky fur mine!" yelled Bill Saunders. "Whisky ev'ry time, ye bet!"

"Here, too!"

"Thet's me, all right!"

There was a great crowding against the bar, and for a few minutes only the clinking of glasses and rude, boisterous laughter could be heard.

The stranger's eye fell upon the three youths, who stood back from the bar, waiting as patiently as possible for the miners to get through drinking.

He eyed the three swiftly, but keenly, and then he said:

"Here, you young fellows. You are not taking anything."

"No, we don't drink," said Bob.

"Well, you can't begin any younger. Come up to the bar and state your preferences."

"Water is good enough for us," said Sam, quietly. "And I guess none of us are thirsty just now."

The man advanced swiftly and faced the three.

"I say for you to come up and have a drink!" he cried, fiercely. "It is an insult to refuse to drink with a man up in this country."

"We don't mean it that way," said George.

"Can't help it. Actions speak louder than words, and when you refuse to drink with a man, you insult him more surely than if you were to call him a liar or slap his face."

"Better let 'em erlone, stranger," said Pretty Pete, with a grimace. "I tried ter make 'em drink with me, an'—"

"Bah!" snarled the dark-faced stranger. "They're going to drink with me, or I'll know the reason why!"

"Ye'll probably know, all right!" chuckled Pretty Pete.

"Are you going to walk up to the bar and drink?" queried the stranger.

"No!" replied the three in chorus.

"Then I'll lead you there!" and he reached for Sam, who happened to be nearest.

Quick as a flash up into the air leaped Sam, out shot his feet, striking the dark-faced man in the chest and sending him to the floor with great force. He was temporarily stunned, and lay there, groaning and squirming, and gasping at a great rate.

"I tol' 'im ter leave 'em erlone," said Pretty Pete.

"But he wouldn't listen ter reason," said Red Rollin.

"No, he seemed ter think he knew et all."

"He'll know more than he did before," chuckled a miner.

"I wouldn't give much fur yer hide, young feller," said Bill Saunders. "Eugene Carroll hain't ther man ter let 'imse'f be treated that way an' not git revenge."

"He had no business bothering me," said Sam, quietly. "I wasn't bothering him."

"Thet's right!"

"This orter be er free country!"

"He got on'y whut he desarved."

"Thet's so! Thet's so!"

Just then Eugene Carroll came to his senses and rose to a sitting posture with a jerk. He felt of his chest gingerly, and then looked up and caught sight of the youth who had kicked him.

With a quick motion he drew a revolver from a belt underneath his coat and leveled it.

"I'll have your life, you young dog!" he hissed.

But before he could pull the trigger George, who had been holding Bob's violin case, gave it a quick toss against the angry man's arm. The muzzle of the weapon was knocked in another direction, and

following the report of the pistol-shot came a wild howl of pain from Bill Saunders.

The bullet had hit him in the calf of the leg, inflicting a painful but not at all serious wound.

"Ow-wow! Ouch-h-h-h!" he howled, leaping up and dancing around at a great rate. "Oh, my leg! Oh—ouch—ow-w-w!"

He stepped on the toes of a miner who sat at the table adjoining, and that worthy, enraged at having his pet corns trampled, gave Saunders a kick and sent him sprawling on his face on the floor.

"Take that, ye blamed awkward elephant!" growled the miner.

"Here! No shooting in here!" cried the owner of the Palace Hotel, running around and confronting Carroll, who had leaped to his feet, giving utterance to threats regarding what he was going to do. "I can't have things all shot up, ye hear?"

"Oh, all right," growled Carroll. "But I'll have your life for this, young fellow!" and he shook his finger at Sam and glared in a menacing manner.

"Not if I can help it," replied Sam, coolly. He was a brave young fellow, and his life with a circus had given him some pretty rough experiences, and he was not as much alarmed as he might have been otherwise. He had heard men make threats before.

Carroll threw a goldpiece on the bar and strode to the door.

"I'll see you again, young fellow!" he hissed, shaking his finger at Sam.

"All right," nodded Sam. "I'll probably see you at the same time."

"You shall pay for that kick with your life!"

Then the angry man passed out through the door and closed it with a slam.

"Thar goes er snake, an' I'll bet on et!" said Pretty Pete.

CHAPTER VI.

RAISING THE WIND.

"He's er vicious one!" said Red Rollin.

"He'll fix ye ef he gits er chanst, young feller," said another.

Bill Saunders limped to the door and opened it and passed out, and as he did so, he said:

"Ye bet he'll fix ye, young feller!"

Then he slammed the door shut and was gone.

"Bill kinder got ther worst uv et ter-night, didn't he?" said Pretty Pete.

"He shore did!" replied Red Rollin, with a hoarse laugh.

Then one of the miners called out:

"Give us som' more moosic, young feller."

"All right," replied Bob.

He placed the violin under his chin and played a lively, rollicking air which elicited unstinted applause when he had finished.

(To be continued.)

NEWS OF THE DAY

AVIATOR SAVES SWIMMER.

An airplane piloted by Ralph Hanson the other day played a part in saving the life of O. Perit, a Tacoma newspaper man, who had been carried on an ebb tide a mile out to sea.

Mr. Perit, who is a fine swimmer, was caught in the strong outward current and carried beyond the breakers. He signalled for help and Aviator Hanson hastily "tuned up" his machine and, in the face of a strong wind, flew out to sea where Mr. Perit was struggling to swim back through the breakers.

The presence of the aviator encouraged Perit to continue his efforts and, as the tide had begun to set shoreward, he managed to reach shore in an exhausted condition, where a large crowd enthusiastically cheered both swimmer and aviator.

EIGHT INTERNED SHIPS SOLD.

Eight Austrian steamers, 50,915 tons in all, which have been interned in American ports since the beginning of the war, have been purchased by the Kerr Navigation Corporation, and will be placed in the transatlantic service by the Kerr Steamship Company. The transaction, which represents an investment of \$12,000,000, was financed by Norwegian bankers.

H. F. Kerr said that not a little could be done to furnish relief for the present shortage of tonnage by acquiring all the remaining Austrian ships that have lain idle since the opening of the war.

"The vessels," Mr. Kerr stated, "not only can be acquired at a considerably less figure than would be demanded to build new ships of equal tonnage, but they can be placed in commission in much less time."

UNUSUAL SIGHT AT MIDWAY, N. Y.

When strangers enter Midway, N. Y., by automobile or railroad trains, they observe numerous mounds in North street at the corporate limits, and often see little animals disappear in them. When they reach the village hotel the majority of strangers are sure to inquire about the mounds.

The mounds are the work of groundhogs—and the wind. The earth surrounding the mounds is a light sand. Years ago woodchucks appeared in the sand lot and dug holes. After a time it was observed that mounds had appeared in the sand lot.

The woodchucks had packed the sand so hard around the holes that the wind had no effect, but blew it away from the holes for several feet, thus forming the mounds.

At the approach of persons the woodchucks climb the mounds and disappear in the holes. Many of the mounds are very steep and the woodchucks often slip back several times before they are able to reach the summit and disappear.

Next winter the Hunters' Club will make an effort to secure a law making it unlawful to shoot or disturb woodchucks.

SPEAKS AFTER 35 YEARS.

Able to speak and hear perfectly after thirty-five years as a deaf mute, Joseph Gertzolowitz, a cutter, was removed from Ward's Island to the Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrants' Aid Society Building, 229 East Broadway, to await word from his only relative, a sister, Mrs. Lottie Cohen. For nearly fifteen months Gertzolowitz had been held in the Manhattan Hospital for the Insane, where he had been taken because, unable to make himself understood, his frantic gestulation had caused physicians to believe his mind was affected.

The cutter's affliction dated back to his seventh year in Kovna, Russia, and the amount of money which his parents spent to cure him compelled them to come here to recoup. What became of them Gertzolowitz could not say. The only thing he remembered was living with his sister somewhere in Monore street. About a year and half ago Gertzolowitz wandered off from his home and could not tell where he lived. Finally his excitement resulted in his commitment to the institution for the insane. Recently he recovered his lost faculties, and, after Doctor Pholson of Ward's Island had examined him, he asked the Hebrew relief organization to try to find his relatives.

WOULDN'T ENLIST CHINAMAN.

Because he cannot fight for the United States in her war with Germany, George Chin is very sad. He is a Chinaman and is part owner of a restaurant in Muncie, Ind. Unaware that his lack of citizenship prevented his being a soldier for the country of his adoption, George, who is husky and healthy, presented himself before Lieut. Guy Hagerty, recruiting officer for the National Guard.

"I want to enlist for America," he said proudly. "America has made me a man and I want to fight like other Americans if there is war. I want to show people Chinese are no cowards, besides."

Lieut. Hagerty explained to him that owing to the alien laws which prevent a Chinaman from becoming an American citizen, one cannot be accepted as a soldier.

"But I am now an American," said Chin, dazedly. "I am no longer a Chinaman. I work here. I live here, I make more money here than I could make in China. I love America only. I become a citizen if I fight for America. I know this."

Chin left the recruiting office sadly, still unable to understand fully why his patriotic offer to serve the United States and to die for her, if necessary, was rejected.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

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HARRY E. WOLFF, Publisher,
166 West 23d St., New York

American troops now landing in France have received a more careful and prolonged training than could possibly be given the most of the regiments hurriedly raised during the Civil War. The story goes that a raw battalion of rough backwoodsmen, who had "volunteered," once joined General Grant. He admired their fine physique, but distrusted the capacity of their uncouth commander to handle troops promptly and efficiently in the field, so he said: "Colonel, I want to see your men at work; call them to attention, and order them to march with shouldered arms in close column to the left flank." Without a moment's hesitation the colonel yelled to his fellow-ruffians: "Boys, look wild thar! Make ready to thicken and go left endways! Tote yer guns! Git!" The maneuver proved a brilliant success, and the self-elected colonel was forthwith officially commissioned.

Good Current News Articles

Indians of the Cheyenne River Reservation have begun extensive sheep raising and are receiving as high as fifty-three cents a pound for the wool. Hides and wool shipped from the reservation this season, not counting the sheep shipped for killing, amounted to \$6,270.

Petrified trunks of oak trees have been found thirty feet underground in sandpits at Fremont, Neb. A theory advanced is that the trees were buried several centuries ago when the stream that is now the Platte River, cut its channel through here. There are now no oak trees in the Platte River valley except transplanted specimens.

A scientific expedition, organized by the Smithsonian Institution and the American Museum of the American Indian, which has been excavating among the Zuni ruins of Hawikuh in Western New Mexico, has exhumed a number of valuable Indian relics dating back to the early sixteenth century. Profusely decorated pottery, baskets, tribal regalia and war implements were found in graves. Remains of walls beneath the site of Hawikuh in prehistoric times before the Indian village was built.

In the time of the Civil War the term "shoddy" was used contemptuously with reference to the material employed in the making of either clothing or blankets. Properly, shoddy is a cloth made by compression rather than by weaving. When badly made it pulls apart under slight tension. When well made it resists tearing even better than woven cloth. It becomes, in fact, a fabric as durable as felt. One of the things to recommend shoddy is that rags can be used in its manufacture. There is a present probability that the United States Government, which has long excluded this fabric from bids for supplies, will modify its specifications for cloths and give it a new trial.

Grins and Chuckles

The Mistress—I am not satisfied with your references. **The Applicant**—Nayther am I, mum, but they're the best I could get.

Guest (studying bill of fare)—Waiter, I have 50 hellers (10 cents). Tell me what you recommend. **Waiter**—Try another restaurant.

"I once knew a man who could speak seven languages." "What did he do?" "Kept still most of the time and listened to his wife."

She—So you told Lady Buncomb she looked as young as her daughter! That caught the old lady, I know. **He**—Yes; but it lost me the daughter.

Dr. Bill (meeting former patient)—Ah! good morning, Mr. Jones. How are you feeling this morning? **Mr. Jones**—Doctor, does it cost anything if I tell you?

Elsie—Oh, you better leave those preserves alone. Ma said if she caught you at 'em again she'd dust your jacket. **Tommy**—I know, but I ain't wearin' any jacket. I took it off on purpose.

First Boy—Say, Johnny, did your mother lick you for playing hookey from school? **Second Boy**—You bet she didn't! **First Boy**—How did you manage to get out of it? **Second Boy**—I told her if she licked me I'd holler loud enough to wake the baby.

The two men who had entered the car seemed to want to occupy seats together. "Can't you sit over a little?" they asked, stopping in front of a pale, scholarly man with eyeglasses. "I do not know," he said, looking at them over his glasses; "but I will move over a little and see."

OLD GRAHAM'S GOLD.

By Kit Clyde

On the right bank of the Hudson, a few miles above the city of New York, surrounded by stately trees and what had once been a beautiful park, stands a large, roomy old stone mansion.

The present owner of Graham Grange was an old man of some sixty or seventy years of age. He was regarded by his neighbors, as well as all who came in contact with him, as eccentric and miserly. Gerald Graham inherited Graham Grange ten years before the opening of our story from an uncle who had lived to a very ripe old age. The uncle was a very rich and also a very charitable man. When he died everybody for miles around the Grange felt that he or she had lost a very dear friend.

After the funeral it was found that no will had been made, or if made, it was lost. Gerald Graham, up in the interior of the State, was the nearest of kin, being the only child of his only brother, and he became master of the estate.

A few days after Gerald Graham took possession of the estate he made a peremptory demand for every penny due, and would listen to no excuse.

In vain did their wives appeal to Mrs. Graham. She could do nothing with him.

She was a widow with one daughter when she married Gerald Graham. The daughter was about ten years old at the time, and he had a son two years older.

She frankly told them that her husband was a hard man, and that the lot of the poorest one among them was a happy one compared to hers.

Time wore on, and the more people saw of Gerald Graham the less they liked him. They would have nothing to do with him, and when his hard-worked wife died there were no friends of the family to follow her to the grave.

Years rolled on, and Clarissa Clark, the stepdaughter, grew into a beautiful womanhood. She did all the housework, for her stepfather would keep no servant. Of course he paid her no wages, and allowed her but two dresses and two pairs of shoes a year.

His son George had grown to manhood—a strapping young fellow, with quite an aptitude for business; but, though very rich, his miserly father would not give him a dollar with which to do business, but insisted on his paying for his board and lodging as long as he remained at home.

By and by the firm for which George was working at a small salary failed, and he was thrown out of employment. He tried in vain to secure another at any rate of pay he could get. Business was dull, and the market overstocked with men and women seeking work.

When he paid for his week's board one day he said to his father:

"This is my last dollar. I shall not be able to pay you anything next week unless I can find a situation."

"In that case I shall not be able to board you, young man," was the reply.

"Father," said George, when he could command his voice, "I have paid you in advance for one week. Give me back the money and I will go away now. I'd rather be turned out of doors now with a few dollars in my pocket than at the end of the week without a penny."

The result was a quarrel, in which the old man had the advantage in being master of the situation. At the end of the week George, having been unable to find work of any description, Clarissa went to the old man and said:

"Father, George has not been able to find work. You surely will not turn him out of the house because he is not able to pay his board?"

"Why should I take care of one who is able to work?" he replied, testily. "He is as well able to work as I am."

"So he is. All he wants is the work to do. He is your son, and—"

"Oh, never mind that, girl. When a man is old enough to take care of himself he should be made to do so. He—"

"Father, you ought to be ashamed of yourself!" Clarissa cried, her eyes flashing indignantly.

"Silence, girl! Go on about your work, and let me alone. I won't have a big strapping fellow living on me that way. Let him take care of himself. He is able to work."

"When George goes I'll go, too, father!" snapped Clarissa, turning to leave the room.

"Eh! What's that you say! You go, too, you ungrateful hussy!"

"Ungrateful!" she retorted. "Me ungrateful! Why, I've worked for you six years without a dollar in the way of wages!"

"Wages! You had your board and clothes! What more do you want?"

"Ten dollars a year pays for all the clothes you give me," she retorted. "I can get a place at seven dollars a month at Dr. Huntington's, and I am going to go there is George goes away."

While he was thinking of what he should say Clarissa left the room and went to meet George.

"I have heard all that took place between you," said George. "You must not leave here, Clarissa. Stay with him till I come back again, or I shall never be able to hear from him or know how things are. Times won't always be hard with me as they are now. Come what will, dear, I'll never forget you and your kindness to me."

That evening Clarissa prepared supper as usual, looking pale and tearful. Now that George was gone the old house would be simply unbearable. She had not a single companion among the girls of the village, for the reason that not one of them dared to come to the house. The old man looked up at her and said:

"You spoke of going away because George has gone, Clarissa. If you do that not one penny of my money will you ever call your own. Do you understand that?"

"That does not move me in the least, father," she replied.

"Money is a good thing to have," said he, shaking his head.

"It is of no account, save to buy with," she replied. "If one does not use it, of what account is it? I have but two poor dresses. What good would a million dollars do me if I did not buy dresses and such things as I need? Listen to me, father. You have done a thing this day that heaven will punish you for. You have turned your own flesh and blood out into the world without a dollar. George is as good a son as a father was ever blessed with. But his father loved a dollar more than he loved his son. Be assured that no good will come to you. You will want George some day, and repent of what you have done."

With that Clarissa turned and left the room, leaving the old miser to ponder on what she had said.

A week later was rent day, and the old miser went among his tenants and collected several hundred dollars, which he carried home with him and placed in his strong-box under the table in his bedroom, intending to take it to the bank in the morning.

About midnight Clarissa heard a groan, followed by a hoarse cry, coming from old Graham's room.

She sprang out of bed, threw on a wrapper, and hastened to see what the matter was.

Just as she reached the door of the old man's room she felt herself caught roughly by the arm, and a gruff voice say:

"Keep quiet, girl, an' yer'll get no hurt!"

She looked around, and by the dim light of a candle saw a masked man at her side with a revolver in his right hand.

Clarissa then sank down, woman-like, in a dead faint.

"That's all right," growled the burglar, turning away. "She is off my hands now, and I'll attend to you, old man."

It was then the burglar espied the strong-box under the table. He released the pressure on the old man's neck and said:

"Have you the key to that box?"

"No."

He searched the old man's pockets and found several keys, one of which fitted the lock on the box.

"George—George! Clarissa!" he cried in his agony, whilst the burglar was filling his pockets with the money he found in the box.

When Clarissa came to she heard her stepfather groaning at a terrible rate. She scrambled to her feet and gazed around the room.

"Why, where is the robber?" she exclaimed.

"He is gone with my precious gold. Oh, oh, oh!" and the old man's groans were awful to hear.

She got a knife and cut the old man loose, and as

soon as he could use his limbs he crawled to the box, looked in, and then began tearing his hair and howling with grief over his loss.

As soon as he could Gerald Graham reported his loss to the proper authorities, and was told that the proper steps to find the robber would be taken. But it was the last he ever heard of the precious gold that was stolen.

One day old Dr. Huntington brought Clarissa a letter. It was from George, telling her that he had found a good situation in the city, and that he would send her a present for her birthday two months hence.

Gerald Graham saw her with the letter, and knew it was from George, and asked her if it was.

"Yes, father," she replied, "he has a situation in the city where he can make a good living."

"Give me his address."

She did so. That day the old man wrote to him to come home.

George wrote back that he would never cross the threshold of Graham Grange again until he could do so independent of his father in a financial sense.

That made the old man very mad.

"Clarissa!" he cried, "I am going to make my will, and if you will promise me not to give George Graham a dollar of my property I'll make you my heir."

"I'll promise you that, father," she said.

The village lawyer came, drew the will, had it properly signed and witnessed, and, after getting his fee, went away.

That night Gerald Graham died in his sleep, of heart disease, and early the next morning Clarissa telegraphed the fact to George.

He came up on the next train and went up to the house.

Clarissa received him with open arms, and left the sole charge of the funeral with him.

He had the old man decently buried, and the day following the village lawyer told him about the old man's will.

He was thunderstruck.

"Why did you not tell me about the will, Clarissa?" he said a few hours later.

"Because I did not think about it," she said. "It was made in my favor on my promising not to give you a dollar of the estate. I made the promise, of course, reserving the right to sell it to you. You can have the entire property for one dollar. Can you afford to pay so much?"

"Oh, yes," he said, handing her the dollar. "It's mine now, is it?"

"Yes, it's all yours."

"Well, now," and he took her hand in his, "I am going to buy a wife with it. I'll give you the whole estate for your hand in marriage. What say you?"

Woman-like, she had to pretend to faint, and then asked him if he loved her.

He vowed that he did, and a few months later they were married.

THE NEWS IN SHORT ARTICLES

CLOCK IN SIDEWALK.

Thousands of persons daily hurry past the corner of Broadway and Maiden lane, New York, and in their haste fail to observe that they are literally walking on time. They glance at the clock in the doorway of the Singer Building or the familiar clock face in St. Paul's Church steeple.

The timepiece in the vault light on the sidewalk at the north corner of Broadway and Maiden lane is stepped on and over unconsciously, although it is there to give the information which the hurrying folk are seeking at either of the two locations mentioned.

The clock has a square white face with black hands and numerals. It occupies a space about ten by eighteen inches in front of a jewelry store. A heavy piece of plate glass protects it from traffic and the weather. Its long existence there is attested by the marred glass, which has become almost "frosted" with scratching from sand and dust ground under foot.

PAPER CANDLES FOR SOLDIERS.

A torch for use by soldiers in the trenches and in their dugouts—a torch so simple that any child can make it—is the invention of Mrs. Edward Gushee, wife of a New York physician. Mrs. Gushee and a staff of girls and boys are now making these torches by the hundreds, and intend to send them in large quantities to the front, according to the Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

To make one of these torches take a newspaper and with a ruler tear it into strips two columns wide. Place six of these strips, one on top of the other—or tear six newspapers at once if you find this easier—roll them up, leaving a small hole through the center; tie the roll with cotton string; boil it in paraffin for twenty minutes, and let it cool.

This makes a candle which can be lighted with a match and will burn without smoke for three-quarters of an hour. It gives better light than an ordinary candle, quite enough light for a soldier to read, write or sew by.

FORESTER SAVES LIFE.

By making of himself a sledge on the snowclad upper slopes of Mount Hood Elijah Coalman, forestry service lookout on the mountain, brought to safety Hans Fuhrer, a badly injured mountain guide, who is in a hospital, in Portland, Ore., and who may recover.

Fuhrer had guided a party of men and women to the summit, 11,000 feet up. When a mile from the top on the descent Fuhrer fell on the sharp blade of an ax, receiving a serious wound in the abdomen.

Coalman, the lookout, had been watching the party through a glass from the summit and saw the accident. He slid, coasted and plunged down the intervening mile in a few minutes. With other members of the party he stanched Fuhrer's wound. Then, throwing himself flat on his back, he drew Fuhrer on his body and directed those in the party to attach a rope to his feet. Holding the wounded man with his clasped arms, Coalman was dragged over the snow two miles to the timber line. There the wounded man was placed in an automobile and brought to this city.

COST OF A SOLDIER'S EQUIPMENT.

It costs \$156.50 to equip an infantryman for service in France, the Committee on Public Information announces. This cost is divided as follows: Clothing, etc., \$101.21; eating utensils, etc., \$7.73; fighting equipment, \$47.36—total, \$156.30.

Items included under "clothing" are as follows: 1 bedsack, 98c.; 3 wool blankets, \$18.75; 1 waist belt, 25c.; 2 pairs wool breeches, \$8.90; 2 wool service coats, \$15.20; 1 hat cord, 8c.; 3 pairs summer drawers, \$1.50; 3 pairs winter drawers, \$4.88; 1 pair wool gloves, 61c.; 1 service hat, \$1.70; 2 pairs extra shoe laces, 5c.; 1 pair canvas leggins, \$1.05; 2 flannel shirts, \$7.28; 2 pair shoes, \$10.20; 5 pairs wool stockings, \$1.50; 4 identification tags, 2c.; 3 summer undershirts, \$1.50; 4 winter undershirts, \$4.88; 1 overcoat, \$14.92; 5 shelter tent pins, 20c.; 1 shelter tent pole, 26c.; 1 poncho, \$3.55; 1 shelter tent, \$2.95—total, \$101.21.

Items included under "eating utensils" are food issued to each man to be carried in his haversack during field service, canteen and canteen cover, cup, knife, fork, spoon meat can, haversack, pack carrier, first-aid kit and pouch to carry it.

The items under "fighting equipment" follow: 1 rifle, \$19.50; 1 bayonet, \$2.15; 2 bayonet scabbards, \$1.13; 1 cartridge belt, \$4.08; 100 cartridges, \$5; 1 steel helmet, \$3; 1 gas mask, \$12; 1 trench tool, 50c.—total, \$47.36.

Prices are subject to frequent changes, so cannot be taken as absolutely accurate in every case. Steel helmets and gas masks are being bought in France and England, as well as manufactured in this country, and the costs of those bought abroad and made here differ. The figure given for a rifle is the cost of making the "United States rifle, model 1903," generally known as the Springfield. The first 600,000 to 800,000 troops to go to France will carry this weapon. The so-called Enfield rifle, used by British troops, is being manufactured to equip other American troops, and is officially known as the "United States rifle, model 1917." This is being made on a "cost-plus-profit" basis so that no accurate figure for it can now be given.

ARTICLES OF ALL KINDS

THIEF PAWNS FIVE GOLD TEETH.

The other afternoon E. C. Tiff, a lawyer of Syracuse, N. Y., entered his office in the Grand block, and as it was hot removed his coat and vest, and hung them on a rack. A few minutes later he left the office. He returned, and an hour later discovered that his coat and vest had been stolen. In the pocket of his vest were five gold teeth, which had been broken from his plate.

He notified the police, who, a few hours later, recovered the teeth in a pawnshop. The coat and vest and gold watch have not been recovered.

RUNS NAKED FOR TEN YEARS.

After running naked on a secluded isle of the Santa Barbara group for ten years, during which time he lived as his ancestors had lived thousands of years before him on fish, mussels and game killed with a stone hatchet, Christian L. Bayer is now a soldier of the United States.

They told Bayer a decade ago in Burlington, Ia., he had tuberculosis and his days were numbered. But when he came here to enlist he passed a perfect physical examination and was at once accepted. The life of a cave man had effected a complete cure. He stripped down and showed a body as tanned as his face.

Bayer is a native of Denmark, 39 years old and weighs 162 pounds.

A THOUSAND GALLONS OF WHISKY POURED AWAY.

An idea of the enormous quantity of liquor seized in supposedly "dry" cities is to be had from the following news item which appeared in the Birmingham (Ala.) News:

A small stream was discovered in Third alley, between Nineteenth and Twentieth streets, recently, shortly after 1 o'clock, and in five minutes after the stream was located over 100 pedestrians passing along Nineteenth street had crowded around the same. At 2 o'clock hundreds of citizens were trying to give the new-born stream a name.

Over 1,000 gallons of whisky and beer were stacked in the police alley during the early morning, and shortly after 1 o'clock Detective Wade smashed the first quart bottle of whisky against the City Hall building.

The crop consisted of what the purity squad has seized during the past six months. There were over twelve trunks filled with whisky and also about fifteen suit-cases containing from twelve to fifteen quarts each was among the wreckage. It is estimated that between \$2,000 and \$2,500 worth of whisky and beer was destroyed.

JERSEY PEACH CROP IS RECORD BREAKER.

Peaches have delivered a punch at the high cost of living that will be felt far into the winter by reason of the canning and drying of large quantities of the extremely bountiful and cheap supply of the fruit of New Jersey this season.

Not for years has there been such a harvest of peaches as is being gathered this season. The countrywide canning crusade has saved the peach growers from disastrous gluts in the markets which would have resulted from such a record breaking crop of fruit under normal conditions of consumption.

Daily Government bulletins on market conditions have helped shippers to avoid glutting the markets, according to C. Fleming Stanger of Glassboro, N. J., president of the New Jersey State Horticultural Society. Mr. Stanger says very little marketable fruit is going to waste in spite of the overloaded orchards.

Growers of this region are shipping a good many carloads of peaches every week into the New York markets, where the prices are a shade better, the growers says, than anywhere else just now. Bushel packages of the better grades of fruit are bringing anywhere from \$1 to \$2.

MANY ATTACKS ON TRADERS REPELLED BY U. S. FLOTILLA.

The Navy Department has received from Vice Admiral Sims voluminous reports of the work which the men and ships under his command have done since the flotilla of American destroyers reached England in May.

Those who have been privileged to read the account of the three months' operations say it is the most thrilling story of American naval achievement since Cervera's fleet was destroyed off Santiago. The reports are replete with stories of American encounters with U boats and of the part played by your destroyers in saving crews of torpedoed merchantmen.

Every page of the Sims report cites a case where the lookouts of the American destroyers and submarine chasers sighted a U boat and forced it to submerge rather than accept battle. In many instances the report cites evidence seen by the destroyers' crew indicating that they had succeeded in "bagging" a submarine, but the Admiral does not claim the actual destruction of the vessels. There is no "elaboration" in the report.

Admiral Sims also cites numerous cases in which the armed guard of merchantmen gave battle to submarines and compelled them to submerge. He indicates that the American gunners have proved that there are no better in the world.

LAUGHABLE EGG TRICK.

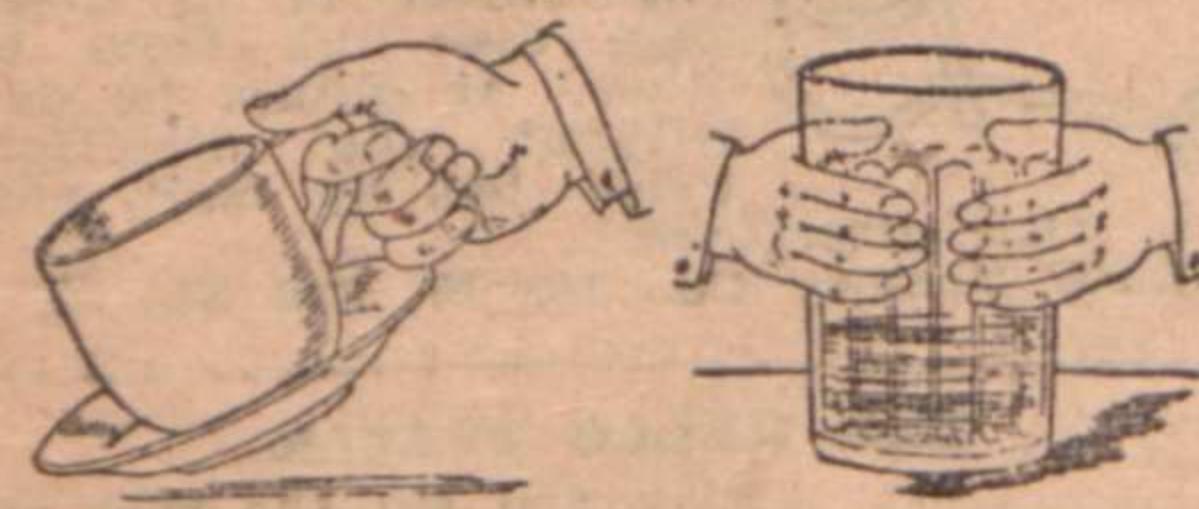
This is the funniest trick ever exhibited and always produces roars of laughter. The performer says to the audience that he requires some eggs for one of his experiments. As no spectator carries any, he calls his assistant, taps him on top of the head, he gags, and an egg comes out of his mouth. This is repeated until six eggs are produced. It is an easy trick to perform, once you know how, and always makes a hit. Directions given for working it. Price, 25 cents by mail, postpaid. Wolff Novelty Co., 168 W. 23d St., N. Y.

WILLARD-JOHNSON PRIZE-FIGHT PUZZLE.

Four strips of cardboard, each three inches by one and a half inches, showing Willard and Johnson in various absurd postures. The solution in the puzzle lies in so arranging the strips that they show Willard in the complete picture, the heavyweight champion. Price, 10c, by mail, postpaid, with directions.

FRANK SMITH, 383 Lenox Ave., N. Y.

RUBBER SUCKER.



Rubber Vacuum Suckers

The latest novelty out! Dishes and plates will stick to the table, cups to the saucers like glue. Put one under a glass and then try to lift it. You can't. Lots of fun. Always put it on a smooth surface and wet the rubber. Many other tricks can be accomplished with this novelty.

Price, 12 cts. each by mail, postpaid. C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d Street, N. Y.

GOOD LUCK GUN FOB.

The real western article carried by the cowboys. It is made of fine leather with a highly nickelized buckle. The holster contains a metal gun, of the same pattern as those used by all the most famous scouts. Any boy wearing one of these fobs will attract attention. It will give him an air of western romance. The prettiest and most serviceable watch fob ever made. Send for one to-day. Price 20 cents each by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

SECOR SPARKLER.



Hold discs in each hand and twist the strings by swinging the toy around and around, about 30 times. Then move the hands apart, pulling on the discs and causing the strings to untwist. This will rotate the wheel and cause the sparks to fly. The continued rotation of the wheel will again twist the strings. When this twisting commences slacken the strings slightly until they are full twisted, then pull. Price 25 cts. each by mail, postpaid.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.



STAR AND CRESCENT PUZZLE.

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